

WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN:  
AMERICA'S STRATEGIC SHORTCOMINGS IN IRREGULAR WARFARE

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# Abstract

How does America improve its Irregular Warfare (IW) capability? Academia defines IW as encompassing insurgency and terrorism. It is used to counter and defeat Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) such as Al Qaeda (AQ) and the Islamic State. 2018 saw 9,600 terrorist attacks and 49 of the 52 conflicts tracked by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program were non-state against state actors.<sup>1</sup> IW remains an immediate ongoing concern for America.

This paper is a historical evaluative dissertation. Chapter one addresses the difficult task of studying IW and the differing definitions of IW (or lack of same) and their history. It addresses the American military's relationship with the concept historically and its current status. It includes a discussion of how this affects the Special Operations Forces (SOF) that are the primary practitioners of IW for the American military.

Chapter two discusses VEOs, one of the five major threats outlined in the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS). Case studies assess how terrorists and insurgents seek to shape public opinion. The first is a classic insurgency campaign, the Algerian Revolution and the second

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<sup>1</sup> Barnett S. Koven, *Re-evaluating Special Operations Forces-led Counterterrorism Efforts*, (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University, 2019), 1.

covers the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) ground-breaking terror campaign. There is also a discussion of ideology and strategy.

Chapter three analyzes the remaining four threats identified by the NDS: China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea. Their use of activities and operations that remain below the threshold of traditional warfare are examined. IW is examined through the lens of the national instruments of power to discuss policy impacts, ramifications, and countermeasures.

This thesis finds that IW is the primary venue of modern combat, while traditional warfare is brinksmanship similar to the Cold War. IW will remain operationally prominent for the foreseeable future. The Department of Defense (DOD) refers to GPC as the 'new normal,' but American dominance in traditional warfare is unquestioned globally. Likewise, American IW capabilities are a known liability, particularly as America has blunted perhaps her sharpest blade, US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). American military chiefs and policymakers have only twice in history prompted efforts to professionalize IW within the military, thus it is unlikely that change is coming. History, doctrine, academia, and career soldiers agree on this.

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# Introduction

How does America correct its strategy to address Irregular Warfare (IW)? IW is primarily defined in academia as encompassing both insurgency and terrorism.<sup>2</sup> IW is the type of warfare America has used to counter and defeat Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) such as Al Qaeda (AQ) and the Islamic State (ISIS) for the last 20 years.<sup>3</sup> In military doctrine the term *warfare* represents the mechanism or mechanics of how war is prosecuted between parties, be they state or non-state actors.<sup>4</sup> Carl von Clausewitz states that warfare has three main objectives: conquer or destroy an enemy's military, possess an enemy's source of strength or national power, and gain a favorable public opinion.<sup>5</sup>

The American military writ large has a problem with strategy of any kind, making this one of the most pressing policy questions for the United States (US) government.<sup>6</sup> Professor

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<sup>2</sup> Eric V. Larson, Derek Eaton, Brian Nichiporuk & Thomas S. Szayna; *Assessing Irregular Warfare*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008), 19.

<sup>3</sup> US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Report*, edited by Donald Rumsfeld, 2006, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, ix-x & 1.

<sup>5</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *Principles of War*, Clausewitz.com, Clausewitz Bookstore, accessed May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.clausewitz.com/mobile/principlesofwar.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> Steven Metz, *Don't Blame the Generals for the Strategic Shortcomings of America's Forever Wars*, World Politics Review, World Politics Review, last updated May 17, 2019, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/27865/don-t-blame-the-generals-for-the-strategic-shortcomings-of-america-s-forever-wars>.

Colin S. Gray notes America's 'persisting strategy deficit in its way of war.'<sup>7</sup> Professor Gregory D. Foster of the National Defense University claims of the current National Defense Strategy: 'It is an ideological tract masquerading as a strategic roadmap; military-centric to the point of militarism; operationally, even tactically oriented, neither grand nor elevated; *Old War* parochial and provincial posing as forward-looking, transformative *New War*.'<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the operational approach utilized by the DOD over the course of 20 years of IW is considered a broken concept, failing to translate tactical successes into strategic victory.<sup>9</sup> Adding to the confusion is the newly stated (but arguably failed) intention of the DOD to holistically embrace IW as a task for all formations in the military.<sup>10</sup> On its face this represents a stark change: the recent past saw Special Operations Forces (SOF) serving as the main effort.<sup>11</sup>

A frequent concern is the advent of military-centric naming conventions (Gray Zone Operations, Chinese *Unrestricted Warfare* or Russian *Hybrid Warfare*) masquerading as strategy. Advances in Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) that allow for greater prosecution of targets (whether on the part of the terror-actor or the counterterrorism (CT) forces pursuing them) have often been presented to the policy maker as faux strategy, when in fact they are merely a means to continue business as usual – without defining a strategic end state.

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<sup>7</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 18.

<sup>8</sup> Gregory Foster, *The National Defense Strategy Is No Strategy*, Defense One, Government Media Executive Group LLC, last updated April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/04/national-defense-strategy-no-strategy/156068/>.

<sup>9</sup> Nicholas A. Heras and Carole O'Leary, *Political Strategy in Unconventional Warfare: Opportunities lost in Eastern Syria and Preparing for the Future*, (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University, 2019), 1.

<sup>10</sup> US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy Irregular Warfare Annex Implementation Plan Brief to the Military Education Coordination Council*, edited by the Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, 2019, 2.

<sup>11</sup> US Congress, Senate, *Posture Statement on US SOF*, General Tony Thomas interview by Senate Armed Services Committee, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Unites States Marine Corps, *Doctrinal Publication 1-3 Tactics*, edited by the Marine Corps Combat Development Command Staff, 2017, 2-19. The *main effort* is a central maneuver warfare concept: concentrating efforts on achieving objectives that lead to victory. Of all the actions going on... recognize one as the most critical to success at that moment. The unit assigned responsibility for accomplishing this key mission is designated as the *main effort*—the focal point upon which converges the combat power of the force.

Sometimes new technology drives theories and hypotheses by academics and the military to define new trends. This in itself is nothing new; in the late 1800s the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB, also commonly referred to as Fenians) took advantage of the advent of Dynamite in their insurgency in an IW campaign known as the Dynamite War.<sup>12</sup>

Though these insurgents used cutting-edge terrorism TTPs, the British Crown provided a kinetic, *direct action* CT response with the creation of Scotland Yard's Special Irish Branch.<sup>13</sup> This enemy-centric approach remains the default response in IW, far outstripping a measured populace-influencing response. The IRB were unprepared for the reaction and failed to grasp the true difference in terrorism and insurgency: insurgencies may be allowed to drag on, particularly poorly executed ones in a colonial holding and outside of the actual homeland. They can be denied and mitigated with political half-measures until action is needed. However, sovereign states – then and now – are compelled to respond to spectacular terror attacks on their homeland. As Major Walter A. Schrepel notes: ‘...terror attacks are pebbles in the shoes of government leaders.’<sup>14</sup> Governments must respond, or risk providing arguments that they are unfit to hold power and unable to secure the populace. In choosing terrorism, the IRB provoked a response that ultimately nullified any benefit derived from their technical advances (Dynamite), and the rebellion was thrown into disarray for decades.

IW also uses asymmetric attacks to exploit vulnerabilities in long-standing systems. In the 9/11 attacks, terrorists seized control of airliners and flew them into the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania (owing to the failure of the plot in one

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<sup>12</sup> Michael Burleigh, *Blood and Rage*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), 13.

<sup>13</sup> Ian Adams and Ray Wilson, *Special Branch: A History 1883-2006*, (London: Biteback Publishing, 2015), Kindle CH 1

<sup>14</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, “Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 84.

instance). 9/11 was so effective that it changed the world economy for all intents and purposes, resulting in an estimated \$80-90 Billion in realized effects globally.<sup>15</sup> Such effects were far beyond the hopes of AQ and it has been referred to as a Black Swan event.<sup>16</sup> But it also forced a response by attacking the American homeland. The ensuing Global War on Terror redefined kinetic, *direct action* CT operations. Clearly such a detrimental effect to their own operations was not the desired end state of AQ.

IW remains an immediate and ongoing concern for America... as recently as 2018 there were over 9600 documented terrorist attacks and 49 of the 52 active conflicts tracked by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program were non-state against state actors.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the vast majority of US military engagements throughout history (not just the last two decades) were IW engagements.

The first chapter of this paper examines the difficult task of studying IW and the resulting definitions of IW (or lack of same) and their history. It addresses the American military's relationship with the concept historically and its current status. It includes a discussion of how this has affected the SOF that are the primary practitioners of IW for the American military. Chapter Two discusses Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs), identified by the National Defense Strategy (NDS) as one of the threats facing America. Terrorists and insurgents seek to shape public opinion and identifying their ideology, as well as America's doctrinal responses, are critical requirements. There are two case studies: the first is a classic insurgency campaign, the Algerian Revolution. The second covers the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) ground-

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<sup>15</sup> Todd Sandler, "Terrorism and counterterrorism: An overview," *Oxford Economic Papers*, (2015): 2.

<sup>16</sup> Mark G. Stewart and John Mueller, "The Curse of the Black Swan," *Journal of Risk Research* 19, no. 10, (2016): 1320.

<sup>17</sup> Barnett S. Koven, *Re-evaluating Special Operations Forces-led Counterterrorism Efforts*, (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University, 2019), 1.

breaking terror campaign. Chapter Three covers the relationship outlined in the NDS between Great Power Competition (GPC) and IW as displayed by the remaining four parties discussed in the NDS (China, Russia, Iran and North Korea).

This thesis finds that IW is the primary venue of modern combat, while GPC is merely brinksmanship similar to the Cold War. IW will remain operationally prominent for the foreseeable future. The DOD refers to GPC as the ‘new normal,’ but American dominance in traditional warfare is unquestioned globally. Likewise, American IW capabilities are a known liability. American military chiefs and policymakers have only twice in history prompted efforts to professionalize IW within the military. History, doctrine, academia, and career soldiers agree on this, but it remains unlikely that the DOD will shift from its current course. IW will most likely be relegated back to obscurity to maintain the status quo.



# Chapter 1 – A Touch of Gray

Making war upon insurgents is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife.<sup>18</sup>  
-T.E. Lawrence

What effect has poor American IW strategy had on policy and practitioners? This chapter's first section addresses academic literature and studies of IW, followed by a section on context that covers definitions and strategic constructs. It finally looks at America's historic usage of IW. Section II examines American IW policy post-WWII and post-Vietnam, then looks at the leading roles American policymakers played. Finally, section III of this chapter examines the effects of American policy on USSOCOM. In closing, this chapter notes the predominance of IW as a mode of warfare. America's lack of strategy has essentially placed the burden of IW onto USSOCOM almost exclusively, with devastating effects to the command.

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<sup>18</sup> John Nagl, 'Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife,' NPR Books, National Public Radio, accessed on 20 April, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/books/titles/138024511/learning-to-eat-soup-with-a-knife-counterinsurgency-lessons-from-malaya-and-viet#excerpt>.

## **I. ACADEMIA, CONTEXT AND HISTORY**

### **a. ACADEMIA**

Academics have significant difficulties in the study of IW, both terrorism and insurgency. This is no small issue, as Czwarno notes that academia plays a critical role. Their singular focus of study produces policy papers, panel appearances, and other channels of communication to advise government policy makers on developing trends. As an example, she ties the academic community's pre-9/11 focus on Asia studies to their failure to alert policy makers to the threat of radical Islam (though this is hardly the singular factor in the event).<sup>19</sup> Czwarno also notes that the academic will have the benefit of time to research within a well-rounded field of study; she contrasts this with military intelligence officers who exercise only a short-term scope of research typically limited to early warning of imminent attacks.<sup>20</sup> This is also noted by McFate and Fondacaro, finding that intelligence cells focus on the 'identification of targets. Most intelligence offices have their hands full with that particular task and are not trained, manned, or organized to undertake investigation of the local sociocultural context.'<sup>21</sup>

Marc Sageman notes that the post-9/11 surge of federal funding to terror research had a counterintuitive and injurious effect on the academic community... the result is that the study of ideology and drivers of terrorism stagnated.<sup>22</sup> Money has driven a very mercenary effect towards research by some. Coupled with a general lack of accurate material the results have been lack-

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<sup>19</sup> Monica Czwarno, "Misjudging Islamic Terrorism: The Academic Community's Failure to Predict 9/11" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29, (2006): 657.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 660.

<sup>21</sup> Montgomery McFate and Steve Fondacaro, "Reflections on the Human Terrain System in the First 4 Years," *Prism* 2, no. 4 (2011): 70.

<sup>22</sup> Marc Sageman, "The Stagnation in Terrorism Research," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 4 (2014): 565, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.895649>.

luster, and schools have shied away from supporting studies. Thus, talented researchers eschew the topic, forming a vicious negative feedback loop.<sup>23</sup>

Stoker and Whiteside note a disturbing trend of decreased knowledge of military history and theory, particularly as it relates to standards such as Clausewitz and Sun Tzu as well as...

...the not-always beneficial drive to develop something new in academic circles. This is particularly true in the international affairs and political science realms, where too often there is professional pressure to develop another microtheory (sic) to explain an element of political or military behavior or practice and then to fit history into it rather than to analyze the past to see what patterns develop and what we can learn.<sup>24</sup>

American military leaders, particularly those selected for field grade command and higher, spend significant amounts of time engaging in academic research; it should be no surprise when they fall into the same habits of other academics and assign new and inappropriate typologies to terrorists' modus operandi.<sup>25</sup> The officer field is known to 'eat their own' via brutal competition, so identifying and naming the latest trend in warfare would not only serve to educate the force but also cement one's military career as a rising star. Since (at least) the Dynamite War of the IRB, new tactical concepts have been offered to replace actual strategy. However, Stoker and Whiteside also note '...when new terms appear—and they will—they must be tested immediately against history and existing theory. Most new so-called classifications of war would be instantly killed if properly examined through these lenses.'<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Marc Sageman, 'The Stagnation in Terrorism Research,' *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26, no. 4 (2014): 569-570, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2014.895649>.

<sup>24</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, 'Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking,' *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 27.

<sup>25</sup> Bart Schuurman, Lasse Lindekilde, Stefan Malthaner, Francis O'Connor, Paul Gill & Noémie Bouhana, 'End of the Lone Wolf: The Typology that Should Not Have Been,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 42, no. 8 (2019): 775.

<sup>26</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 28.

Table 1 *A short outline of 'war-winning approaches' in the history of strategic thought*<sup>27</sup>

Concept	When was it coined/origins	Key ideas/assumptions	Effects/criticisms
<b>Area bombing/ strategic bombing</b>	The effects of limited aerial bombardment during WWI led to the doctrine of 'area bombing' in WWII.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychological/moral effects are key to military success – 'breaking the enemy's will', rather than attrition warfare.</li> <li>City bombing demoralises the civilian population, which will turn against its own government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychological effects were not achieved; resolve of the population was often strengthened.</li> <li>The extent to which area bombing contributed to the allies' victory in WWII is highly contested.</li> </ul>
<b>Network-centric warfare/ 'The Revolution in Military Affairs'</b>	The success of US coalition forces in the 1991 Gulf War promoted the doctrine of network-centric warfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced technology and networked into a system of systems is key to military success.</li> <li>Precision weapons will make wars shorter, 'cleaner' and easier to win.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Success of 1991 Gulf War could not be repeated in other cases, especially Afghanistan and Iraq 2003.</li> <li>Technological optimism/ technology as key to military success is highly contested.</li> </ul>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare</b>	Coined in the 1980s, but became prominent after 9/11 as a concept that could highlight the problems of network-centric warfare/ technological approaches to war	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- War has evolved in generations: 1st generation war = massed firepower/Napoleonic wars; 2nd generation war = firepower/WWI; 3rd generation war: manoeuvre warfare/WWII, 4th generation warfare: evolved from insurgency, using political, economic, social and military networks to break enemy leadership's will/Hamas, Hezbollah, Al Qaeda.- Allowing 'weaker'/ non-state opponents to exploit technological reliance/strengths of state opponents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequencing of war into generations is artificial: firepower, manoeuvre, insurgency, attempts to 'break the enemy's will to resist' are not mutually exclusive and elements of each can be detected in most wars.</li> <li>4th generation war falsely claims that traditional state-on-state warfare is a relic of the past</li> </ul>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Generation Warfare</b>	Concept coined by the Russian strategic thinker Vladimir Slipchenko, based on the US/NATO approach to the Kosovo war in 1999, which he described as the 'first 6 <sup>th</sup> generation war'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sophisticated technology/ technological superiority are the key to winning wars. Overall the concept is very similar to the idea of Network-Centric Warfare.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criticised in Russia for overemphasising the role of technology in warfare.</li> </ul>
<b>Counter-insurgency warfare</b>	Counterinsurgency rose to prominence in the mid-2000s as a concept that would help make wars like those in Afghanistan or Iraq more 'winnable' for the US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In conflicts involving insurgency, technological superiority and conventional military force are not helpful and can even be counterproductive. Knowledge of local culture and history as well as the 'winning of hearts and minds' of the local population are of central importance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overemphasis on counterinsurgency during the 2000s has decreased the US military's ability to fight manoeuvre wars.</li> <li>'Winning of hearts and minds' is easier said than done.</li> </ul>
<b>Asymmetric warfare</b>	Became a prominent concept in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks to describe the approach used by Al Qaeda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asymmetric approaches allow weaker actors, such as Al Qaeda, to defeat opponents that are considerably stronger technologically and numerically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asymmetry is nothing new, but is an age-old strategic tenet, going back to Sun Tzu the ancient-world Chinese strategist.</li> </ul>
<b>Hybrid warfare</b>	Coined in 2007, but rose to prominence after Russia's annexation of Crimea to highlight the effectiveness of non-military means in addition to limited military force to achieve political objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The coordinated use of non-military and military means decreases the need for using overwhelming firepower/excessive military force</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The idea of hybrid warfare is not substantially different from concepts such as 4th generation war.</li> <li>All wars are 'hybrid' to an extent and include instruments other than the use of actual military force (diplomacy, information, economic means)</li> </ul>

## **b. CONTEXT: HOW IW FITS IN THE PICTURE**

Terms such as Hybrid War, Unrestricted Warfare, and Gray Zone attempt to describe competition outside the norms of traditional warfare. Today these contentious activities are specifically designed to fall short of triggering armed response. These terms needlessly duplicate the term IW, which has the precedent of being both a legally defined and doctrinal term. The National Defense Authorization Act §1202 (*Support of special operations for irregular warfare*) defines IW as – ‘activities in support of predetermined *United States policy and military objectives* conducted by, with, and through regular forces, irregular forces, groups, and individuals participating in competition between state and non-state actors *short of traditional armed conflict* (emphasis is the author’s).’<sup>28</sup> Such a definition is broad enough to encompass all manner of specifics from the three aforementioned terms. Gray further explains: ‘Defense communities great and small, regular and irregular, are always in the market for some magic device or wonderful new method of warfare that should enable its owner-practitioner to evade the lore of strategy, with all its difficulties.’<sup>29</sup>

*Strategy* is a critical concept that underpins IW in its difference from traditional warfare. This must not be confused with *Grand Strategy*: the first is the larger use of military power in pursuing a political objective, and is an element of the second. *Grand Strategy* is the use of all policy and instruments of national power (frequently referred to as Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic – or DIME) in pursuit of the political national interests.<sup>30</sup> The *strategic*

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<sup>27</sup> Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, ‘Russia and Hybrid Warfare – Going Beyond the Label,’ January 2016, *Project Report - Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Definitions, Capabilities, Scope and Possible Responses*, Kikimora Publications at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland.

<sup>28</sup> National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, House Resolution 2810, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., (January 3, 2017), § 1202 Support of Special Operations for Irregular Warfare.

<sup>29</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century*, (Kent: Orion, 2005), 214.

<sup>30</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 5.

level of warfare is the uppermost echelon of military operational art that touches on policy aims directly; as a mechanism it requires an identifiable military end-state which can be achieved and implemented within a larger political framework.<sup>31</sup> The criticality of the linkage between policy (*Grand Strategy*) and defined military end states (*Strategy*) cannot be overstated. America's 4-year election cycle (occasionally bumped down to two-years if the Congress creates a lame duck President) was designed by the same Constitution that eschewed a standing Army... its effects on the aforementioned processes is deleterious almost by design. Meanwhile the Chinese have a hundred-year plan. The only means to overcome the inherently unstable transition of power between parties and people is the agreeance of concepts defined by doctrinal restraints and constraints. Failing to utilize these 'left and right limits' (military term to describe a field of fire being assigned to a soldier) essentially guarantees operational chaos.

The next descending level of warfare is the *operational* level, which links strategic military end-states to tactical objectives by sequencing the arrangement of actions and elements in time, space, and purpose; this is accomplished by striking the enemy's strongest point that provides the will or ability to wage war, known as a *center of gravity* (COG).<sup>32</sup> Thus the COGs in traditional warfare almost always provide a capability (such as military elements, units, or leadership) and are targeted by offensive, defensive, or stability operations.<sup>33</sup> The COG for IW is most frequently defined as the third option from Clausewitz – a favorable public opinion, and was famously described by Mao Tse-Tung as the support of the people, who are 'the water' in

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<sup>31</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-7 & I-8.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 5.

<sup>33</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-5.

which the guerilla swims.<sup>34</sup> IW operations must be assessed by their impact upon popular legitimacy and their influence upon relevant populations. This stands in stark contrast to the quaint and somewhat anachronistic outlook of traditional warfare, which considers the indigenous people of a battle area to be agnostic for all intents and purposes – simply succumbing to either victory or defeat.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, the *tactical* level of warfare is planning and execution to achieve military objectives assigned to tactical units in battle.<sup>36</sup> ‘Guerrilla’ (literally *small war*) tactics are also known as asymmetric (which has threatened to become another distracting label) – leveraging a weaker force’s options to advantage against a stronger force. They avoid large-scale, direct, prolonged confrontations (thus the common description ‘hit and run’). Moghadam, et al, posit that guerilla warfare or insurgent operations target uniformed forces of the opposition, while terrorism is used to target civilians or those not engaged in combat, for the express purpose of spectacle and psychological impact.<sup>37</sup> By contrast, counterinsurgent troops must tactically accomplish three key tasks: force protection (of their own elements against insurgent attacks), distinguishing between combatants and non-combatants, and physical elimination of insurgents.<sup>38</sup> These are in tension with each other (particularly when viewed through the lens of popular sentiment); frequently, accomplishing one of these tasks results in failing at another.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, (New York: Praeger, 1961), 93.

Carl von Clausewitz, ‘Principles of War,’ Clausewitz.com, Clausewitz Bookstore, accessed May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.clausewitz.com/mobile/principlesofwar.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-6.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, I-8.

<sup>37</sup> Assaf Moghadam, Ronit Berger and Polina Beliakova, "Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent: Labeling and Analyzing Contemporary Terrorist Actors," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8, no. 5 (October 2014): 5.

<sup>38</sup> Lorenzo Zambarnardi, “Counter-Insurgency’s Impossible Trilemma,” *The Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (July 2010): 22.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

The term IW and its definition are rife with detractors, variations, and synonyms. As noted previously, §1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act (*Support of special operations for irregular warfare*) provides a legally binding definition of IW, which notably specifies ‘competition between state and non-state actors short of traditional armed conflict.’ Joint Publication 1 (JP 1), *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, also offers a basic definition of IW:

...a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). This form [of warfare] is labeled as irregular in order to highlight its non-Westphalian context. The strategic point of IW is to gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of, a relevant population. IW emerged as a major and pervasive form of warfare although it is not a historical form of warfare. In IW a less powerful adversary seeks to disrupt or negate the military capabilities and advantages of a more powerful military force, which usually serves that nation’s established government.<sup>40</sup>

The terms ‘violent’ and ‘non-Westphalian’ suggest the military doctrine has a different scope on how it sees IW than the USG writ large, and the specification of violence begs the question: how does the DOD intend to pursue IW if it is a clash of ideologies without violence? This paper specifically discusses the Russian annexation of Crimea, which happened with almost no violence.<sup>41</sup> *Non-Westphalian* sets IW apart from warfare between members of the community of nations (state actors), which the military defines as traditional warfare.<sup>42</sup> There are several implications to the Westphalian concept (frequently used as a term for the modern state system of neo-liberal global government ) but the two most common are that sovereign states maintain a

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<sup>40</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-6.

<sup>41</sup> Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, ‘Russia and Hybrid Warfare – Going Beyond the Label,’ January 2016, *Project Report - Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Definitions, Capabilities, Scope and Possible Responses*, Kikimora Publications at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland.

<sup>42</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-5.



monopoly of force within their territories and do not interfere in domestic issues of their neighbors.<sup>43</sup> Traditional warfare is thus limited to state-versus-state conflict and precludes one country intervening in another's internal battles. It is characterized as the maneuver of combat formations into tactical position to utilize firepower (thus the term *fire and maneuver*) to accomplish the 'defeat of an adversary's armed forces, the destruction of an adversary's war-making capacity, and/or the seizure or retention of territory.'<sup>44</sup> Though it is the last mentioned, seizing terrain may be the most readily identified aspect of traditional warfare.

IW breaks from the Westphalian concept by encompassing incursions into the sovereign state of other countries by external sponsors and sovereign states losing the monopoly on use of force, as seen in terrorism and insurgency. It is frequently characterized in terms of *exhaustion and erosion*.<sup>45</sup> Defensive missions used in IW include counterterrorism (CT)<sup>46</sup>, counterinsurgency (COIN), Foreign Internal Defense (FID)<sup>47</sup>, and Stability operations<sup>48</sup> (when supporting a sovereign state against insurgency). Unconventional warfare (UW, support of an insurgency) is an offensive IW mission to affect regime change. Koven notes that CT, and specifically kinetic CT missions such as drone strikes, are the US Government's (USG) preferred response, with over 80 percent of the USG CT budget going to agencies principally engaged in

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<sup>43</sup> Richard Coggins, 'Westphalian State System,' Oxford Reference, Oxford University Press, last accessed March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803121924198>

<sup>44</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-5.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, I-4.

<sup>46</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 18.

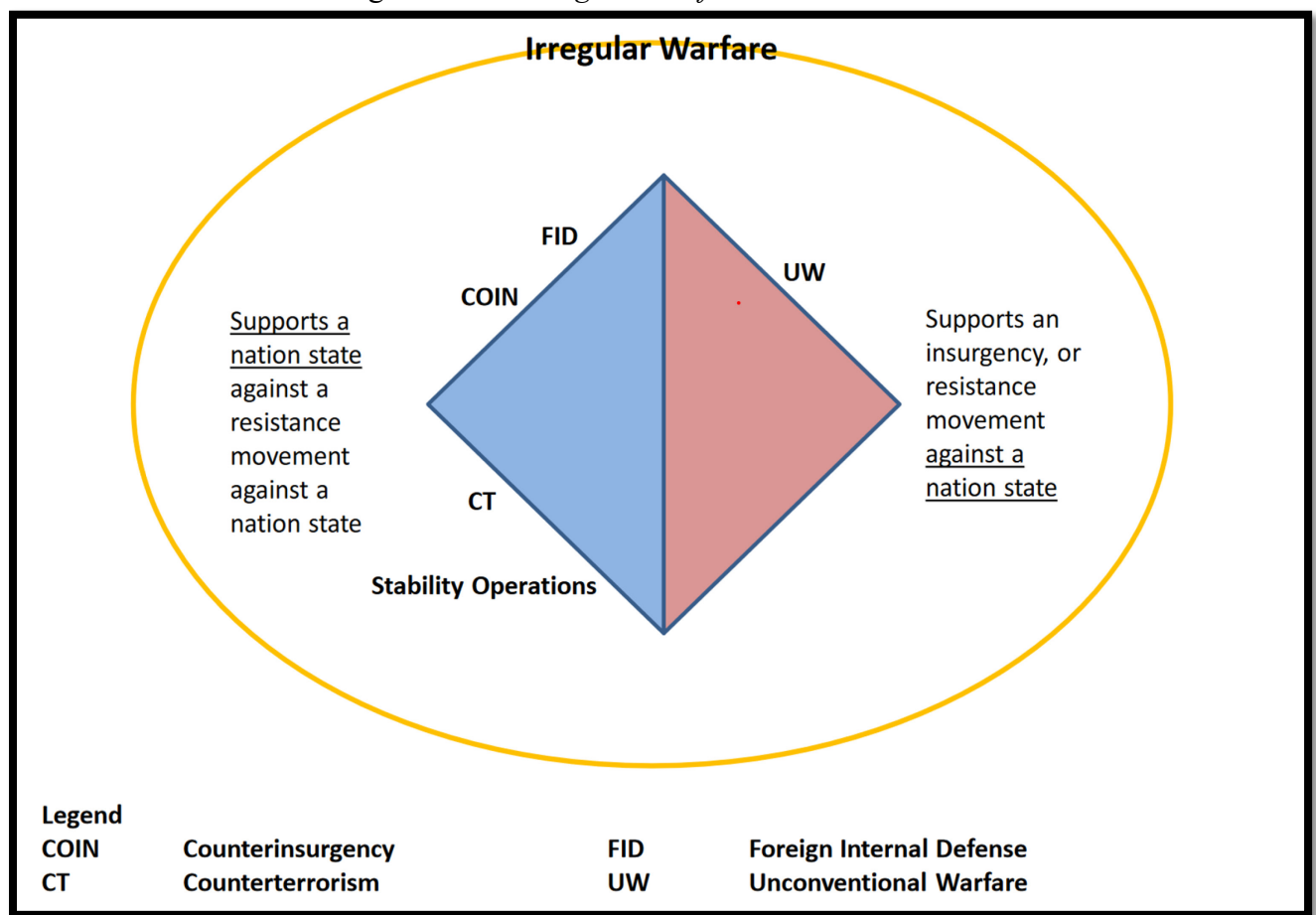
Eric V. Larson, Derek Eaton, Brian Nichiporuk & Thomas S. Szayna; *Assessing Irregular Warfare*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008), 51.

<sup>47</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-05 Special Operations*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, II-10. FID refers to US activities that support a HN's internal defense and development (IDAD) strategy and program designed to protect against subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to their internal security, and stability.

<sup>48</sup> US Department of Defense, Directive 3000.05 *Stabilization*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2018, 15. *Stabilization* is a political endeavor involving an integrated civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence.

military or law enforcement efforts to disrupt terrorism between 2002 and 2017.<sup>49</sup> COIN saw a renaissance in the 2000s but is already an afterthought in the new GPC environment.<sup>50</sup> UW, FID and Stability Operations are given little attention by the military writ large. Notably, the amount of USG funding for IW activities by SOF is \$10M.<sup>51</sup> However, title 10 U.S. Code § 127e (*Support of special operations to combat terrorism*) provides \$100M for combatting terrorism (the kinetic-based subset of IW), once again displaying bias for kinetic operations.<sup>52</sup>

Figure 1 *Joint irregular warfare activities*<sup>53</sup>



<sup>49</sup> Barnett S. Koven, *Re-evaluating Special Operations Forces-led Counterterrorism Efforts*, (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University, 2019), 1.

<sup>50</sup> David H. Ucko, "Learning Difficulties: The US Way of Irregular Warfare," *Themenschwerpunkt* 36, (2018): 23.

<sup>51</sup> National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, House Resolution 2810, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., (January 3, 2017), § 1202 Support of Special Operations for Irregular Warfare.

<sup>52</sup> US Congress, '10 U.S. Code § 127e. Support of special operations to combat terrorism,' Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, accessed April 20<sup>th</sup> 2020, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/10/127e>.

<sup>53</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-05 Special Operations*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, II-2.

Compounding this dynamic within DOD is America's broken culture of strategic planning and the impulse to seize upon buzzwords and tactics as faux doctrine. Blurred Lines discusses 'the construction of elements of U.S. strategy on myth and misunderstanding and the militarization of grand strategy... the *tacticization* of strategy. U.S. leaders have taken a badly formed tactical concept and used it as one of the pillars for the creation of strategy.'<sup>54</sup> This reflects the USG and USSOCOM bias for kinetic action, and played out in the drone program as well. Bush latched onto the technical advancement drones experienced under his administration, but Obama ordered 10 times more strikes than Bush.<sup>55</sup> This is a classic move by Democratic Presidents to use tech (or SOF) that allows a small BOG signature while still taking action operationally.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile President Obama's nearly 5,000 drone strikes resulted in multiple warnings from his staff between 2009-2013, noting that they 'systematically undermined the U.S. effort to quell terrorism by creating more support for al Qaeda... Some mid-level CIA officers opposed the strikes in Pakistan as early as 2009... they were infuriating Muslim males and making them more willing to join al Qaeda.'<sup>57</sup> Under President Trump, drone strikes are on pace to increase yet again in some regions.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 25.

<sup>55</sup> Jessica Purkiss and Jack Serle, 'Obama's covert drone war in numbers: ten times more strikes than Bush,' thebureauinvestigates.com, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, last updated on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2017-01-17/obamas-covert-drone-war-in-numbers-ten-times-more-strikes-than-bush>.

<sup>56</sup> Michael Fumento, 'The Democrats' Special Forces Fetish,' washingtonexaminer.com, last updated March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/weekly-standard/the-democrats-special-forces-fetish>.

Robert Kaplan, 'Robert D. Kaplan on Syria and the Middle East (Agenda),' stratfor.com, last updated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/robert-d-kaplan-syria-and-middle-east-agenda>.

<sup>57</sup> Garreth Porter, 'The Permanent-War Complex Industry in the cockpit: what Eisenhower couldn't have foreseen,' *The American Conservative*, November-December 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Jessica Purkiss, 'Trump's first year in numbers: Strikes triple in Yemen and Somalia,' thebureauinvestigates.com, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, last updated on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2018-01-19/strikes-in-somalia-and-yemen-triple-in-trumps-first-year-in-office>.

Figure 2 Yemeni soldier looks at graffiti protesting U.S. drone strike in Sanaa, Yemen.<sup>59</sup>



In JP 1, the DOD stipulates (with typical understatement) that ‘the symmetry between the naming conventions of traditional and irregular warfare is not ideal.’<sup>60</sup> Many political dynamics certainly account for this, one of them being the deliberate move away from the term UW. UW is commonly, and incorrectly, used as interchangeable with IW, for example in the US Army’s description of Russian UW activities.<sup>61</sup>

Perhaps the most relevant reason to move away from UW is the advent of Public Law 114-92 Sec. 1097, S.1356 — 114th Congress (2015-2016), National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, which defines UW as ‘activities conducted to enable a resistance

<sup>59</sup> Andrea Germanos, ‘Witnesses: US Military Killed Fleeing Child In Latest Botched Yemen Raid,’ *mintpressnews.com*, last updated May 30th, 2017, <https://www.mintpressnews.com/witnesses-us-military-killed-fleeing-child-latest-botched-yemen-raid/228292/>

<sup>60</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, I-5.

<sup>61</sup> US Army, *Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-1 The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028*, edited by the Training and Doctrine Command Staff, 2018, 10.

movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, or guerrilla force in a denied area.’<sup>62</sup> Thus, UW is very specifically a resistance-based operation under the larger umbrella term IW for DOD doctrine. UW is also prescribed by USSOCOM to the US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) which acts as the lead component for UW in the DOD. Specifically, US Army Special Forces, known as the Green Berets, are the only DOD formation organized, trained and equipped for UW, whereas IW is a mission that may now be tasked (at least theoretically) to all DOD elements.<sup>63</sup>

### c. AMERICA’S IW HISTORY

Clearly IW is a historic form of warfare. One synonym, *Small Wars*, has been in use since at least 1899 when British Major Charles Edward Callwell of His Majesty’s Royal Artillery penned *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*.<sup>64</sup> He defines *Small Wars* to ‘include all campaigns other than those where both the opposing sides consist of regular troops. It comprises the expeditions against savages and semi-civilized races by disciplined soldiers, campaigns undertaken to suppress rebellious and guerilla warfare in a parts of the world (sic) where organized armies are struggling against opponents who will not meet them in the open field. It thus obviously covers operations very varying in their scope and in their conditions.’<sup>65</sup> Similarly, the *Small Wars Manual* published by the United States Marine Corps (USMC) in 1940 defines

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<sup>62</sup> US Army Special Operations Command, *Unconventional Warfare Pocket Guide*, edited by the USASOC Deputy Chief of Staff G3, Sensitive Activities Division G3X, 2016, 5.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

General Joseph L. Votel, Lieutenant General Charles T. Cleveland, Colonel Charles T. Connett, and Lieutenant Colonel Will Irwin, "Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 80, (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2016): 103.

<sup>64</sup> Major Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principals and Practice*, (London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1899), Kindle Location 50, CH 1.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

*Small Wars* as: ‘Operations... wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and of such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation.’<sup>66</sup> Thus the concept has included whole-of-government responses combined with military force in uncertain situations beneath the scope of traditional warfare since the outset.

These definitions denote a wide range of possible permutations and there is no commonly accepted definition. As such, this paper moves on to address IW with a functional framework of approaches in the current strategic context of GPC. IW operations of the greatest policy interest are of two main types: population-centric IW (typically COIN) and enemy-centric CT. Gray confirms this concept: ‘The irregular enemies alluded to... are assumed to be insurgents and terrorists.’ He further specifies that ‘despite the wide range of terrorist-insurgent challenges... *a single “working theory”* (emphasis is the author’s) of irregular warfare and how best to oppose it has sufficient integrity to deserve our confidence.’<sup>67</sup>

The regularity with which America engages in IW operations (and the fact it generated a manual to codify them as far back as 1940) denotes again how poorly the term *Irregular* captures the concept. Max Boot makes clear in his book *Invisible Armies* that America’s IW experience dates back to the American Revolution – and not just in tactical terms but also in strategic and political aspects.<sup>68</sup> The spread of literacy and increased publication of documents such as

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<sup>66</sup> US Marine Corps, *Fleet Marine Force Reference Publication 12-15 Small Wars Manual*, edited by the Marine Corps Combat Development Command Staff, 1990, 1.

<sup>67</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 18.

<sup>68</sup> Steve Inskeep hosting Max Boot, ‘American Revolution Reinvents Guerrilla Warfare,’ Morning Edition, National Public Radio, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2013/01/15/169388719/guerrilla-warfare-turningpoint-america-revolution>.

Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* and *The Declaration of Independence* appealed to British public opinion (a term which first appeared in 1776 appropriately enough). The British House of Commons voted by a narrow margin to discontinue offensive operations in 1782, and with the loss of Parliament's blessing King George was forced to relent.<sup>69</sup> This clearly demonstrated a victory through gaining a favorable public opinion, but it also illustrates the American military's propensity to forget hard-won knowledge (an unfortunate and recurring theme), as noted in an interview with Colonel David Hackworth:

We didn't learn from the past. We didn't learn from our own experience by going back to when we beat Britain in 1776. At that time the British had argued that we didn't fight in formations such as theirs, a big block formation; we didn't meet them in the open and we fought like the Indians, behind trees, using concealment and cover and so on. And a couple of hundred years later we had the British mentality towards fighting and we had forgotten the very lessons that we had taught the British.<sup>70</sup>

The Small Wars Journal website notes: 'During the 20th Century, the United States arguably engaged in Peer on Peer battle [traditional form of warfare] four times... World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the first Gulf War.' It further notes 'In the introduction of the Small Wars Manual, the authors state, "Small wars represent the normal and frequent operations of the Marine Corps. During about 85 of the last 100 years, the Marine Corps... landed troops 180 times in 37 countries from 1800 to 1934."' <sup>71</sup>

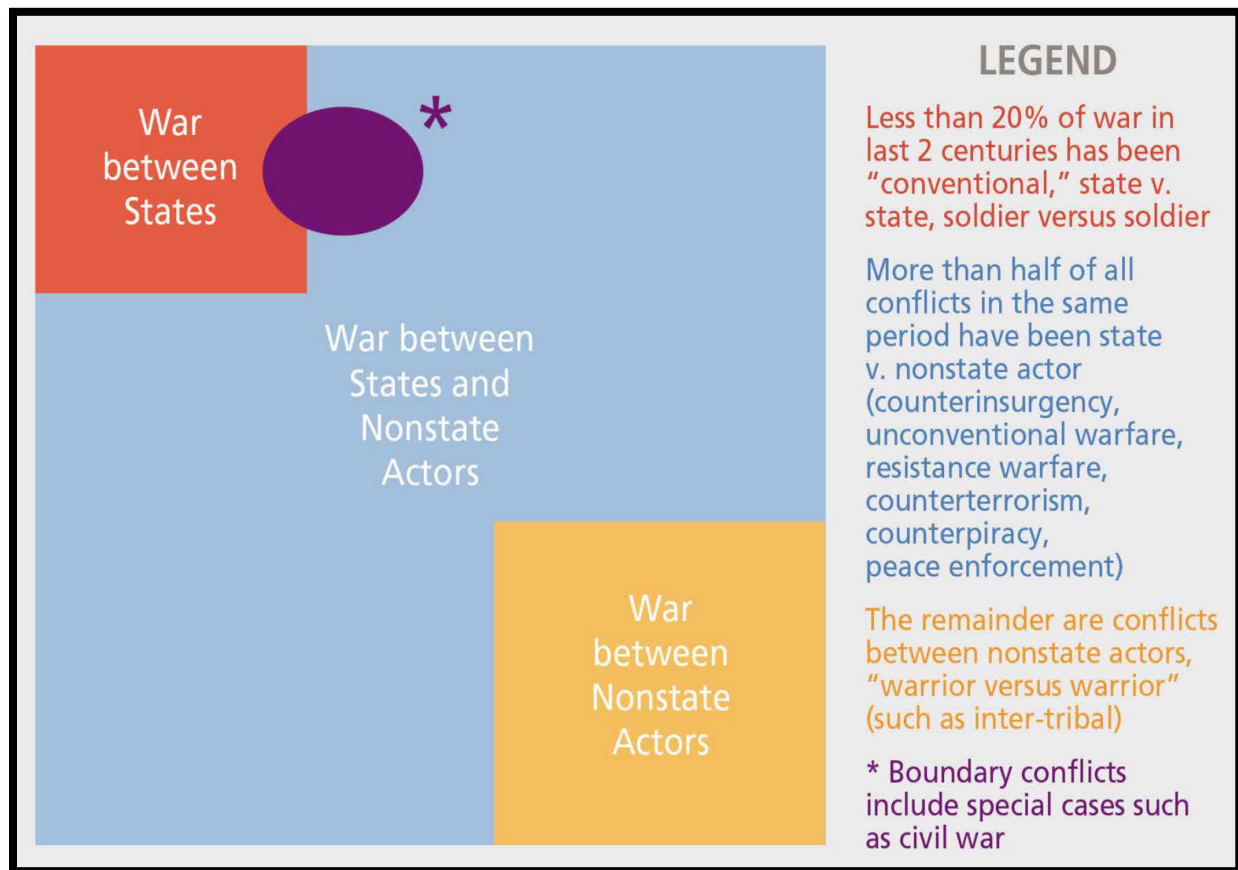
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<sup>69</sup> Steve Inskeep hosting Max Boot, 'American Revolution Reinvents Guerrilla Warfare,' Morning Edition, National Public Radio, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2013/01/15/169388719/guerrilla-warfare-turningpoint-america-revolution>.

<sup>70</sup> 'Interview with Col. David Hackworth, U.S. Army, South Vietnam,' Guerrilla Wars, People's Century, Public Broadcast Service, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury/episodes/guerrillawars/hackworthtranscript.html>.

<sup>71</sup> Robert B. Scaife, 'The Regularity of Irregular Warfare,' Small Wars Journal, Small Wars Foundation, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-regularity-of-irregular-warfare>.

Figure 3 *Typology of conflict: the reality of war*<sup>72</sup>



Traditional warfare is actually the more recent innovation from a historical view... IW in the form of tribal warfare has been the mechanism of choice in the majority of human experience.<sup>73</sup> Boot notes: 'In some places, states emerged only in the past century, and their ability to carry out such basic functions as maintaining an army remains tenuous at best.'<sup>74</sup> Gray concurs: 'Historically assessed, symmetrical warfare has been the rare exception, not the rule.'<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Dr. Sebastian Gorka, "How America Will Be Attacked: Irregular Warfare, the Islamic State, Russia, and China," *Military Review* 33, no. 3 (September-October 2016): 31.

<sup>73</sup> Max Boot, 'The Evolution of Irregular War: Insurgents and Guerrillas From Akkadia to Afghanistan,' *Foreign Affairs*, Council on Foreign Relations, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2013-02-05/evolution-irregular-war>.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Colin S. Gray, "Thinking Asymmetrically in Times of Terror," *Parameters-US Army War College Quarterly*, (Spring 2002): 13.



And Professor Hy Rothstein adds: ‘American strategic culture has difficulty accepting... small wars during what is presumably peacetime. Americans insist on defining war and peace as distinct and mutually exclusive.’<sup>76</sup> Thus the idea of a perpetual state of ongoing IW sits poorly with both the American political body and public who, in true capitalist form, seek out *peace dividends*.<sup>77</sup>

## II. AMERICA’S IW POLICY AND POLICYMAKERS

### a. POST-WWII

The election of John F. Kennedy (JFK) to President and the general environment post-WWII appeared to change the tides regarding IW. Counterintuitively, people saw the end of violence globally as an opportunity to use violence locally for their own purposes. Colonial powers had shown their weakness when they were forced to raise indigenous leaders and intellectuals for WWII efforts.<sup>78</sup> These same indigenous leaders took advantage of the United Nations’ propaganda regarding self-determination, and Mao formalized and codified a proven model to guide local uprisings as the post-colonial world unfolded.<sup>79</sup> The world was ripe for revolution and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) under Khrushchev promised to

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<sup>76</sup> Hy S. Rothstein, “Less is More: the problematic future of irregular warfare in an era of collapsing states,” *Third World Quarterly* 28, no.2 (2007): 280.

<sup>77</sup> James Chen, ‘Peace Dividends,’ Investopedia, Dotdash Publishing, accessed 20 April 2020, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/peace-dividend.asp>. Peace dividend describes a state in which a country is no longer at war, and its government can afford to reduce defense spending and reallocate it elsewhere. Peace dividend also may refer to a rise in market sentiment, which in turn sparks an increase in stock prices, after a war ends or a major threat to national security has been eliminated. The money recouped from defense spending is generally used for the good of society and human or sustainable development — projects that involve new housing, education, and health care, for example

<sup>78</sup> John Ellis, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, (London: Greenhill, 1975), 200.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

support ‘just wars of liberation and popular uprisings.’<sup>80</sup> Revolutions flourished in numerous locations such as Greece, the Philippines, Malaya, Algeria, Cuba, and Vietnam.<sup>81</sup>

Algeria is often cited as the classic instance of insurgent warfare, and proved that France’s defeat in Indochina could be recreated.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, when asked what America should have learned from France prior to Vietnam (i.e. regarding French defeats in Indochina and Algeria), Colonel Hackworth noted:

Well, I think the major lesson they should have learned was that that war didn't involve the security of France, and the security of the United States wasn't at issue either. On a tactical level, they didn't have an objective. The Americans should have studied the lessons of the French very closely and taken something from them. A correspondent once asked General Westmoreland, the American commanding general and architect of the war, what he thought of how the French fought the war and was he studying the lessons of the French? He said, "Why should I study the lessons of the French? They haven't won a war since Napoleon." This was the American attitude of total arrogance.<sup>83</sup>

Once in office JFK addressed this revolutionary scenario through IW and specifically UW. He directed Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) McNamara to create Special Group (Counter-Insurgency) and the US Army to include COIN in all levels of training curricula.<sup>84</sup> He shifted responsibility for UW from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to the DOD, which resulted in the deployment of the US Army’s 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) to Vietnam in September,

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<sup>80</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 38.

<sup>81</sup> John Ellis, *From the Barrel of a Gun*, (London: Greenhill, 1975), 200-221.

<sup>82</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill and Molly Dunigan, *Paths to Victory*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013), 25.

<sup>83</sup> ‘Interview with Col. David Hackworth, U.S. Army, South Vietnam,’ *Guerrilla Wars*, People’s Century, Public Broadcast Service, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury/episodes/guerrillawars/hackworthtranscript.html>.

<sup>84</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 40-41.

1961.<sup>85</sup> JFK visited Brigadier General William Yarborough at the US Army Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, NC, a month later.<sup>86</sup>

Figure 4 *JFK and Brigadier General Yarborough, Fort Bragg, NC*<sup>87</sup>



Yarborough risked wearing his unauthorized beret to meet the President; the meeting impressed JFK such that he gave public support to the US Army Special Forces in an official memorandum to the Army, noting “The Green Beret is again becoming a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom.”<sup>88</sup>

The US Army introduced Field Manual (FM) 31-15 Operations Against Irregular Forces, FM 31-16 Counter guerrilla Operations, and FM 31-22(A) US Army Counterinsurgency Forces.<sup>89</sup> However, the ground gained in addressing IW would not last after Kennedy’s assassination. The loss of his patronage allowed for the dominant negative sentiment towards Special Forces by the

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<sup>85</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 40-41.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Capt. John W. Strickland, ‘The Green Berets and Kennedy: Two legacies forever united,’ army.mil, US Army, last updated November 21, 2019, [https://www.army.mil/article/229902/the\\_green\\_berets\\_and\\_kennedy\\_two\\_legacies\\_forever\\_united](https://www.army.mil/article/229902/the_green_berets_and_kennedy_two_legacies_forever_united)

<sup>88</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 40-41.

<sup>89</sup> Robert B. Scaife, ‘The Regularity of Irregular Warfare,’ Small Wars Journal, Small Wars Foundation, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-regularity-of-irregular-warfare>.

US Army's conventional leadership. One Army General labeled them as 'fugitives from responsibility' owing to their work beyond the normal Army chain of command with projects such as the Village Defense Program and Special Observations Group (decentralized operations that allowed the Special Forces to engage with the indigenous populace.)<sup>90</sup> While there were ignominious episodes (as there are in any organization), these were played up more to deride the Special Forces in general than as any specific operational deficiency.<sup>91</sup> The US Army had never accepted the concept of Special Forces conducting true UW, and refused to see them as anything more than "high-speed" infantry as noted by Colonel Aaron Bank (founder of the Green Berets) himself:

The time had come to stop trying to sell Special Forces by passing them off as super-Rangers. We pointed out that it definitely showed duplication and overlap. The Special Forces mission should drop any reference to Ranger and commando operations and should define clearly Special Forces Operations (UW) with emphasis on deep penetration (strategic), an unlimited time factor, and exploitation of the guerrilla potential.<sup>92</sup>

## **b. POST-VIETNAM**

Rothstein notes that post-Vietnam, 'the Army in particular embarked upon a process of doctrinal renewal focusing on large-scale conventional warfare... In effect, the army exorcised itself doctrinally of the fundamental problems that irregular threats presented.'<sup>93</sup> The Small Wars Journal website notes that 'following US withdrawal from Vietnam, many of these lessons

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<sup>90</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 45.

<sup>91</sup> Thomas Ricks, 'An Army chief of staff labels Special Forces soldiers 'fugitives from responsibility,' too odd for the regulars,' Best Defense, Foreign Policy, The Slate Group, last updated 11 March 2011, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/03/11/an-army-chief-of-staff-labels-special-forces-soldiers-fugitives-from-responsibility-too-odd-for-the-regulars/>

<sup>92</sup> Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, 'Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare,' (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 65.

<sup>93</sup> Hy S. Rothstein, "Less is More: the problematic future of irregular warfare in an era of collapsing states," *Third World Quarterly* 28, no.2 (2007): 280.

learned [in IW] were forgotten and the focus shifted back to regular warfare throughout the latter three decades of the 20th Century.’<sup>94</sup> Indeed, the Army reduction of Green Berets from 13,000 to 3,000 men between 1969 and 1980 reveals the true threat of eradication facing the UW force.<sup>95</sup>

Institutional bias against IW within DOD should be an ongoing concern. Regardless of talking points that ‘IW is as strategically important as traditional warfare and DOD must be equally capable in both,’ and the ‘DOD will be proficient in IW,’ history suggests a healthy skepticism is appropriate.<sup>96</sup> Vacca and Davidson note that a historical trend of dismissing unorthodox tactics as diverting from true military methods can be seen post-conflict.<sup>97</sup> As noted by Gray over a decade ago: ‘Readers who suspect that irregular warfare is a convenient catch-all concept are mainly correct.’<sup>98</sup> It is clear that IW largely consists of the throw-away variations of warfare disparaged by the US for decades. Ucko demonstrates that even in the post-9/11 world this has not truly changed:

In terms of organizational structures, the U.S. Army – the main military actor in counterinsurgency – showed no desire to reorient its force structure to augment seriously its suitability for counterinsurgency. Incidentally, America’s re-engagement with counterinsurgency coincided with what the Army termed “the most ambitious restructuring of its forces since World War II,” namely their modularization into brigade combat teams (BCTs) of 3,500-4,000 soldiers each. The fluidity resulting from such flux might have been exploited to incorporate some of the urgent lessons drawn from on-going campaigns, such as the need for military police, engineers, medical units, civil affairs, linguists, psychological operations (PSYOPS), and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams, to name but a few of the assets commonly called for but available in far too short supply. Instead, the BCT units, though marketed as flexible, remain

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<sup>94</sup> Robert B. Scaife, ‘The Regularity of Irregular Warfare,’ Small Wars Journal, Small Wars Foundation, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-regularity-of-irregular-warfare>.

<sup>95</sup> Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, ‘Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare,’ (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 66.

<sup>96</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy USD(P), *DOD Directive 3000.07 Irregular Warfare*, edited by the USD(P) staff, 2017, 1.

<sup>97</sup> Alexander Vacca and Mark Davidson, “The Regularity of Irregular Warfare,” *Parameters-US Army War College Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 18.

<sup>98</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?*, (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 214-215.

near-exclusively configured for major combat operations. Despite stability operations having been designated by the Department of Defense as equal in importance to conventional combat, no part of the force structure was specifically oriented toward the tasks of such operations: the establishment of civil security and control, the restoration of essential services, and support to governance and to economic and infrastructure development.<sup>99</sup>

History clearly shows that the GPC of the Cold War era always played out as IW. The 60s and 70s saw solid evidence of hybrid models, with state actors partnering with non-state terrorists to achieve best effects across both models. Socialists, Communists, and Middle Eastern actors have all worked together in IW against America and her allies. America's allies from WWII became her nemesis, and they were backing numerous revolutions to spread Communist influence.<sup>100</sup> The Soviet Union sponsored the PLO once Yuri Andropov took power in 1967.<sup>101</sup> The Chinese also sponsored the PLO as early as 1960, and would eventually provide doctrine, weapons, money and officer exchanges.<sup>102</sup> As early as 1967 the East Germany Communist regime was supporting Palestinian terrorists and their various political organizations, backing the 'Zionism as Racism' resolution by the United Nations (UN) in November of 1975:

In June 1979, the Stasi signed a formal agreement of cooperation with the PLO intelligence services based on their shared interest in preventing the use of East Germany as a base for terrorist operations against Western Europe and, instead, fostering it as a base for terrorist operations against Israel. The contact between

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<sup>99</sup> David H. Ucko, 'Systems Failure: The US Way of Irregular Warfare,' *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 30, no. 1 (2019): 8.

<sup>100</sup> Claude G. Berube, 'How American Operatives Saved the Man Who Started the Vietnam War,' HistoryNet.com, World History Group, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.historynet.com/how-american-operatives-saved-the-man-who-started-the-vietnam-war.htm>.

Jiayi Gao, 'Fighting Side by Side: Cross-Border Military Exchanges and Cooperation Between the Chinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh, 1945–1949,' *The China Review* 19, no. 3 (August 2019): 123-148.

<sup>101</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 71.

<sup>102</sup> Shaina Oppenheimer, 'Weapons and Ideology: Files Reveal How China Armed and Trained the Palestinians,' Haaretz.com, Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd., accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-how-china-became-the-palestinians-biggest-ally-in-the-1960s-1.7619544?v=1592065398944>.

the two services was Counterterrorism Department XXII, run by Gerhard Neiber.<sup>103</sup>

The DOD's claim that traditional warfare must now take priority over IW in the 21<sup>st</sup> century's GPC seems a convenience which is half-hearted at best and fraudulent at worst.

### **c. POLICYMAKERS TAKE THE LEAD**

The ubiquitous nature of IW in American policy has resulted in the rise of SOF as the operational unit of choice; this in itself may be taken as a proof of concept that IW is an omnipresent concern. IW and SOF both run counter to the traditions and culture of the military services (as hinted at by Colonel Yarborough wearing an unauthorized beret to meet the President).<sup>104</sup> In the 1970s the PLO and their unique IW effects directly led to the rise of SOF and CT units across the western world, including GSG-9 in Germany, GIGN in France, and others.<sup>105</sup> America flirted with the concept of a CT force but it would take the 1979 hostage scenario in Iran to force the deployment of America's recently created CT unit, Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (SFOD-D, commonly referred to as Delta Force).<sup>106</sup>

These operations were poorly supported across the American military due to service-specific parochial mentality (Delta and SOF had no parent unit or accompanying General Officers to provide patronage at the time). The resulting catastrophe during Operation Eagle

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<sup>103</sup> Jeffrey Herf, 'East Germany's Assault on Israel,' *Commentary*, (June, 2016): 31.

<sup>104</sup> Maria Ryan, "'Full spectrum dominance': Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense, and US irregular warfare strategy, 2001–2008,' *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 1 (2014): 46.

<sup>105</sup> Ben Knight, 'Germany expands anti-terror squad GSG 9,' DW, DeutscheWelt, last updated 15 January 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-expands-anti-terror-squad-gsg-9/a-42148371>.

Paul Peachey, 'Who are GIGN? Elite police force formed after 1972 Olympics attack on Israelis,' Independent, Independent Digital News and Media Limited, last updated 9 January 2015, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/who-are-gign-elite-police-force-formed-after-1972-olympics-attack-on-israelis-9969163.html>.

<sup>106</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 65-76.

Claw killed 8 service members in the Iranian desert, which prompted legislative action in the form of the Goldwater/Nichols Act and the Nunn/Cohen Amendment. This legislation is the origin of USSOCOM and the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) in the late 80s and forced the military services to adapt to the future of joint service operations.<sup>107</sup> The Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the legislation paints a clear picture of the problem:

Although several elements of this provision [special operations reorganization] are more specific than may normally be expected in this legislation, the conferees determined that the seriousness of the problems and the inability or unwillingness of the Defense Department to solve them left no alternative. The action of the conference committee is fully consistent with the power provided in the Constitution for the Congress to 'provide for the common Defense'. The conferees determined that the failure to act forcefully in this area and at this time would be inconsistent with the responsibilities of the Congress to the American people.<sup>108</sup>

In the 80s the Reagan Doctrine of rolling back achievements gained by the USSR due to subversion and communist-backed insurgencies provided a last-minute reprieve for UW and the Green Berets. The Army Chief of Staff (the senior Army General) acted as patron and deployed the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group to Central and South America. Congress demanded a small Boots on the Ground (BOG) operational signature, so no more than 55 Americans ever deployed into country at any one time, but their IW operations were nonetheless successful.<sup>109</sup> American SOF also conducted IW to support Afghanistan's freedom fighters in their war against the occupying

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<sup>107</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 65-76.

<sup>108</sup> Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, 'Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare,' (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 68.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 67.

General Joseph L. Votel, Lieutenant General Charles T. Cleveland, Colonel Charles T. Connett, and Lieutenant Colonel Will Irwin, 'Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone,' *Joint Forces Quarterly* 80, (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2016): 103.



USSR. Although successful in the short term, this played a role in the creation of AQ.<sup>110</sup> During the 80s terrorism shifted from primarily state-sponsored towards a non-state sponsored and religious aspect which played out in the Iranian hostage crisis and the Mujahedeen response to the invasion of Afghanistan, but American policy makers still failed to realize it.<sup>111</sup> Entering the 90s American SOF had developed exquisite enemy-centric CT and kinetic capabilities in the form of SFOD-D and JSOC. However, little changed regarding populace-oriented IW, the use of Special Forces in UW, or the relations with General Officers. During Desert Shield, SF teams made nearly immediate link-up with the Kuwaiti resistance, which provided 95% of the intelligence. But they were prevented from conducting UW by those who felt it was too high risk or that they needed more training, including General Schwarzkopf.<sup>112</sup> Later in the 90s, Operation Gothic Serpent in Mogadishu revealed America's shortcomings in conducting IW. When Task Force Ranger requested Abrams tanks, Bradley armored vehicles, and an AC-130 gunship, the Clinton administration denied those requests thinking it was too large an operational signature.<sup>113</sup> Though the mission was a success, two helicopters were unexpectedly shot down and 18 American soldiers killed as the mission transitioned to a recovery effort. Another 73 were injured. The Wall Street Journal reported:

Many military experts believe that if the U.S. forces had had armor, fewer would have died. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin resigned two months after Somalia, having acknowledged that his decision on the armor had been an error. A 1994 Senate Armed Services Committee investigation reached the same conclusion. But perhaps the most poignant statement came from retired Lieutenant Colonel

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<sup>110</sup> Dr. Lorry M. Fenner, Dr. Mark E. Stout and Ms. Jessica L. Goldings, 'Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past & Future through Captured Records.' Conference proceedings at the National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., September 13-14, 2011. <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a569571.pdf>.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, 'Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare,' (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 74.

<sup>113</sup> 'Clinton's Black Hawk History - On Somalia, the ex-president is as mendacious as ever,' *Free Republic*, Free Republic LLC, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/728352/posts>.

Larry Joyce, father of Sergeant Casey Joyce, a Ranger killed in Mogadishu: "Had there been armor... I contend that my son would probably be alive today..."<sup>114</sup>

American policy makers failed to realize the true power of the Somali warlords and fell into not one but two frequently seen IW traps:

1. *Policy overreach without the full intent to execute the mission* – the successful mission was followed by US withdrawal from Somalia and the release of those detained during Gothic Serpent, begging the question: why go after them in the first place?<sup>115</sup>
2. *Over-extension of an elite unit* – as will be discussed in Chapter 2, elite military units suffer from poor mission concepts regularly in IW. This is not the first time a military unit was denied a mission essential requirement or sent against a target beyond the scope of their capabilities for political reasons. Another example is the use of Navy Sea, Air, and Land platoons (SEALs) for the seizure of Paitilla airfield in Panama (not a doctrinal mission for SEALs) that resulted in four killed in action and seven others wounded.<sup>116</sup>

In 1997 the CIA learned that AQ had sent trainers to Somalia in 1992, fearing that the operations there were in preparation to seek bin Laden in Sudan: 'They coached the [Somali militia] rocket-propelled grenade guys to aim for the tail rotors of U.S. Black Hawks,' according to Mark Bowden, author of *Black Hawk Down*.<sup>117</sup> Scholar Richard Shultz notes that risk-averse leadership after Somalia and Clinton-era policy which held terrorism to be a law enforcement issue resulted in reticence to engage in offensive CT, allowing AQ's 9/11 plot to unfold.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> 'Clinton's Black Hawk History - On Somalia, the ex-president is as mendacious as ever,' *Free Republic*, Free Republic LLC, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/728352/posts>.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> David Evans, 'A Miscalculation of Mission for the SEALs in Panama?,' *Chicago Tribune*, Chicago Tribune, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1990-02-09-9001120248-story.html>.

<sup>117</sup> James Gordon Meek, 'Black Hawk Down's Anniversary: Al Qaeda's Hidden Hand,' *ABC News*, ABC News Internet Ventures, accessed July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/black-hawk-anniversary-al-qaedas-hidden-hand/story?id=20462820>.

<sup>118</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 85.

Besides the response to 9/11 as an obvious driving factor, Donald Rumsfeld and Michael Vickers are primarily responsible for both the resurgence of IW policy and the continued linkage to SOF as practitioners. Rumsfeld, serving as SECDEF under President George W. Bush, began a comprehensive move to shift the DOD into IW footing and directly linked it to an increase in SOF manning, capability, and authority. Maria Ryan notes that as early as 2001, the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) records Rumsfeld questioning the need for the *All Domain Dominance* campaign plan (famously known as the ‘war-on-two-fronts’) derived from operations occurring in both the European and Pacific theaters in WWII. Rumsfeld did not refer to an IW capability by name but laid ground work for exactly such capabilities.<sup>119</sup> The QDR noted that state-based threats of a conventional nature no longer held exclusive sway in security affairs. Armed conflict had changed ‘in ways that render military forces and doctrines of great powers obsolescent... [I]t is not enough to plan for large conventional wars in distant theaters. Instead, the United States must identify the capabilities required to deter and defeat adversaries who will rely on surprise, deception, and asymmetric warfare to achieve their objectives.’<sup>120</sup> Nor was this merely reactive to the attacks of 9/11; the QDR was almost entirely written prior to the event. Ryan contends that Rumsfeld saw the lack of IW capability as a gap in the *All Domain Dominance* plan which needed mending.<sup>121</sup>

Rumsfeld would continue pushing SOF to lead the fight: he directed General Charles Holland, then commander of USSOCOM, to plan for the future accordingly. The 2004 Unified Command Plan designated the USSOCOM commander as ‘the lead combatant commander for

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<sup>119</sup>Maria Ryan, “‘Full spectrum dominance’: Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense, and US irregular warfare strategy, 2001–2008,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 1 (2014): 44-45.

<sup>120</sup> US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Report*, edited by Donald Rumsfeld, 2001, iv.

<sup>121</sup> Maria Ryan, “‘Full spectrum dominance’: Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense, and US irregular warfare strategy, 2001–2008,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 1 (2014): 44-45.

planning, synchronizing, and as directed, executing global operations against terrorist networks in coordination with combatant commanders.’<sup>122</sup> Ryan astutely notes that this move was countercultural in the military; the conventional services had distanced themselves from SOF (as well as IW) and then been forced by operational failure and legislation to operate in a joint service capacity.<sup>123</sup> Conventional commands opposed giving USSOCOM synchronizing authority – meaning it could issue orders to other commands regarding global counterterrorism operations.<sup>124</sup> The ubiquity of IW led to SOF as the force of choice. Gray noted as early as 2005 that ‘given the contemporary and widely anticipated future dominance of irregular warfare over regular warfare, it is not surprising that SOF around the world appear to be entering a golden era.’<sup>125</sup>

By the time the 2006 QDR was released a comprehensive IW policy was fully realized:

In the post-September 11 world, irregular warfare has emerged as the dominant form of warfare confronting the United States, its allies and its partners; accordingly, guidance must account for distributed, long-duration operations, including unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and stabilization and reconstruction operations.<sup>126</sup>

The SOF baseline budget had increased by 81% since 2001. The Army’s Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) increased its graduation rate from 282 new active duty enlisted Special Forces personnel in 2001 to 617 new personnel in 2005 – the equivalent of an additional SF Battalion each year – and continued to push towards a goal of graduating 750 students per

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<sup>122</sup> Maria Ryan, “‘Full spectrum dominance’: Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense, and US irregular warfare strategy, 2001–2008,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 1 (2014): 45-46.

<sup>123</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie, *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 65-76.

<sup>124</sup> Maria Ryan, “‘Full spectrum dominance’: Donald Rumsfeld, the Department of Defense, and US irregular warfare strategy, 2001–2008,” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 25, no. 1 (2014): 45-46.

<sup>125</sup> Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century*, (Kent: Orion, 2005), 215.

<sup>126</sup> US Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Report*, edited by Donald Rumsfeld, 2006, 36.

year.<sup>127</sup> Rumsfeld ordered the Army to expand active duty Special Forces battalions by one-third by Fiscal Year 2007 (essentially an increase of five battalions) as well as boost Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs units by 3,700 personnel (a 33% increase). He also ordered the creation of a Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) composed of 2,600 Marines and Navy personnel to train foreign military units and conduct direct action and special reconnaissance. SEAL Teams were ordered to increase manning levels to conduct direct action missions, and a SOF unmanned aerial vehicle squadron was created. SOF was growing exponentially in response to the IW mission requirement and policy was being changed under Rumsfeld's direction.<sup>128</sup>

Michael Vickers was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD SOLIC, who performs service Secretary-like duties over USSOCOM, as would the Secretary of the Army over the US Army). Vickers took this guidance and worked to establish DOD Directive 3000.07 (IW). After the 2006 QDR, the military services were required to plan (but not execute) for implementation of an IW capability. The lack of DOD commitment (reminiscent of the lackluster efforts tied to Operation Eagle Claw) combined with the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) request that Vickers testify as to progress in IW capabilities and capacity compelled him into action. Vickers partnered with USSOCOM commander Admiral Eric Olson and successfully signed into existence the IW policy in December of 2008.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 90.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 161-163.

### III. EFFECTS ON AMERICAN SPECIAL OPERATION FORCES

Joint Publication 3-05 *Special Operations* notes that:

SOF are selected, trained, and equipped to conduct all forms of IW. Special operations considers the totality of the cognitive, informational, physical, cultural, and social aspects of the operational environment to influence the local population's behavior through unique capabilities to identify and influence relevant populations, enhance stability, prevent conflict, and when necessary, fight and defeat adversaries.<sup>130</sup>

The clear and obvious bias to SOF conducting IW is to be expected: four of the five doctrinal missions (UW, FID, COIN, and CT) under the IW umbrella are SOF Core Missions.<sup>131</sup> However 20 years of continuous war have left America's SOF brittle, exposed and vulnerable in many ways, as noted by the Congressional Research Center:

...three legislative provisions call for ASD SOLIC and USSOCOM... to take an introspective look at U.S. SOF's culture, roles and responsibilities, adequacy of resources, organizational structure, and the adequacy of training, education, and personnel. Some have suggested these provisions are a precursor for congressional and DOD actions to "rein in and reorient" U.S. SOF from fighting terrorists to taking on nation-states instead. Others, citing reportedly nonsanctioned (sic) military combat operations in Africa, where U.S. SOF are said to have strayed from their train and assist mandate, have questioned whether or not U.S. SOF was involved in direct combat in Niger. Some believe this situation calls into question the adequacy of civilian oversight and control of U.S. SOF. Others assert that the size of U.S. SOF and the scope of their missions have expanded beyond the ability of USSOCOM to handle them and that congressional actions to increase ASD SOLIC oversight and control of U.S. SOF are necessary to improve the current state of affairs. *Aware that U.S. SOF are overburdened and that there is a need to find the right balance between continuing to challenge terrorist organizations while simultaneously addressing growing irregular warfare threats posed by nation-states* [emphasis is the author's], policymakers will likely make good use of the two forthcoming congressionally mandated reviews. It is possible that over the next few years, significant public policy

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<sup>130</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-05 Special Operations*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2017, II-1.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

debates on the future of USSOCOM and U.S. SOF will be undertaken, potentially resulting in a number of changes for ASD SOLIC, USSOCOM, and U.S. SOF.<sup>132</sup>

SOF by design are intended for ‘niche’ mission sets and not meant to be the main effort of a campaign plan. Special Operations are ‘often conducted in hostile, politically, and/or diplomatically sensitive environments... characterized by... time-sensitivity, clandestine or covert nature, low visibility, work with or through indigenous forces... and a high degree of risk.’<sup>133</sup> SOF elements are ‘specifically selected, organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations.’<sup>134</sup> As such, SOF elements are intended to provide high (strategic) return on investment for low (tactical) level opportunity cost.<sup>135</sup> Put another way USSOCOM should deliver a full range of agile, flexible contingency responses through ‘innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches...’<sup>136</sup>

However, USSOCOM commander General Tony Thomas notes: ‘Special Operations Forces are the *main effort*, or *major supporting effort* for US VEO-focused operations in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq... essentially, everywhere Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria are to be found.’<sup>137</sup> Which is to say, everywhere America is at war. Beyond the 2004 designation of USSOCOM as global synchronizer and planner for counterterrorism, 2008 saw the command designated as the DOD proponent for Security Force Assistance (SFA)

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<sup>132</sup> Andrew Feickert, *US SOF: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2019), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS21048>.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Andreas Hedenstrom and Marius Kristiansen, ‘Military Assistance in Support of Negotiations, Defense Security Sector Reforms and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration,’ Small Wars Journal, Small Wars Foundation, accessed April 5th 2020, [https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/military-assistance-in-support-of-negotiations-defense-security-sector-reforms-and-disarmam#\\_edn1](https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/military-assistance-in-support-of-negotiations-defense-security-sector-reforms-and-disarmam#_edn1).

<sup>136</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 132.

<sup>137</sup> US Congress, Senate, *Posture Statement on US SOF*, General Tony Thomas interview by Senate Armed Services Committee, May 4th, 2017.

synchronizing function in global training and assistance planning. In 2016, the Obama administration assigned USSOCOM the DOD lead effort to counter Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), previously assigned to U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM). And in 2018, USSOCOM was designated to field a transregional Military Information Support Operations (MISO) capability to address the opportunities and risks of global information space.<sup>138</sup>

Two decades of combat as the main effort has had obvious – and very public – detrimental effects on USSOCOM’s small force. In light of several high-profile incidents ranging from the death of four Special Forces soldiers in Niger to the expulsion of an entire SEAL unit by Iraq’s operational commander, there is now no question that SOF has been pushed too far.<sup>139</sup> As noted in the USA Today, ‘Degradation of these forces is a national security problem we ignore at our own peril.’<sup>140</sup> The USSOCOM commander directed a comprehensive review of SOF culture and ethics which found that causal factors across all incidents of misconduct were:

...SOF culture overly focused on employment and mission accomplishment to the detriment of leadership, discipline, and accountability... additional concerns regarding the selection of SOF personnel (military, civilian, contractors) selected to fill assessment, selection, and initial training roles, and whether they demonstrated the appropriate balance of character and competence for these tasks... the creation of ad hoc SOF command and control structures to support the bias towards force employment increases the demand for rank-appropriate leaders to staff those structures, resulting in command teams (O-5 and O-6 commanders and their senior enlisted leaders) [Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels as well as their Command Sergeants Major] and key staff being absent from their units and

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<sup>138</sup> Andrew Feickert, *US SOF: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2019), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS21048>.

<sup>139</sup> Andrew Milburn, ‘How to Fix a Broken Special Operations Culture,’ War on the Rocks, War on the Rocks, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/09/how-to-fix-a-broken-special-operations-culture/>.

<sup>140</sup> Rachel E. Van Landingham, Geoffrey S. Corn and Robert Bracknell, ‘Is there a values crisis in special operations forces? National security could be at risk.,’ Opinion, USA Today, Gannett Satellite Information Network, LLC, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/07/26/special-forces-values-crisis-congress-must-investigate-fix-column/1790315001/>.



responsibilities while their units are preparing for operational deployment... current employment models disrupt purpose-built teams, consume leadership capacity, and impact individual predictability... support of ad hoc requirements contributes to the slow erosion of leadership, discipline and accountability and the habitual breaking apart of SOF units to meet demands strains effective present and engaged leadership.<sup>141</sup>

On paper, the shift from IW to a GPC scenario would look like a needed and welcome break for USSOCOM. It is temptingly simple to conceive of IW as a distractor to addressing near-peer competitors: ‘Simply put, we took our eye off of the biggest threats in favor of the closest threats... In many cases we haven’t looked at these things very deeply as they simply weren’t the 25 meter targets. Now they are.’<sup>142</sup> However, the advent of GPC is seen by most to merely continue the IW context of competition below traditional warfare’s levels of conflict. Should this be accurate it can only bode ill for USSOCOM, already struggling to self-correct after two decades at war.

This author was recently asked by a retired Special Forces General for an opinion on what was wrong with USSOCOM and SOF culture. The reply:

1. SOF has become the default answer for policy makers – the ‘Easy’ button,
2. SOF has, as a result of number 1, become the Main Effort for the GWOT, and
3. SECDEF Rumsfeld’s requirement to grow SOF immediately, in direct violation of policy and doctrine, resulted in poorly trained, vetted, and acclimated operators within SOF who have sullied the reputation of the command.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Andrew Feickert, *US SOF: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2019), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS21048>.

<sup>142</sup> Dr. David Walton, ‘SOF Paradigm in Great Power Competition,’ October 2017, Strategic Multilayer Assessment, Invited Perspective Series published by NSI, Inc.

<sup>143</sup> US Special Operations Command, *SOF Truths*, USSOCOM, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.socom.mil/about/sof-truths>. The SOF Truths are guiding principles for Special Operations; two that stand out as relevant are III *Special Operations Forces cannot be mass produced* and IV *Competent Special Operations Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur*. Refer to Appendix A.

SOF has borne out these effects while being the de facto IW force, when clearly it is not equipped to operate as a main effort: it is a niche element. This *over-extension of an elite unit* is reminiscent of the French Paras in Algeria:

The media hailed the audacious paras as heroes of the war. In the battles against the moujahidine, the paras proved to be hard-charging, shock troops, pursuing the moujahidine into their sanctuaries. Even “politicians of the Left entrusted these same soldiers with exorbitant powers” on the basis of their celebrity. Although the paras numbered less than 5% of the 400,000-man French force, they did most of the fighting and their notoriety was not undeserved. Journalist A. P. Lentin wrote that the paras “represented the quintessence of basic courage and deadly efficiency in the service of the maintenance of order.” From the perspective of the European citizens on the streets of Algiers, they were demi-gods who could do no wrong —and those can be the worst kind of soldier.<sup>144</sup>

The use of SOF as the IW practitioner may pass the test in a CT setting, but for most IW it represents a broken logic; SOF as an element was designed to operate in small numbers with a limited and sometimes non-existent footprint. Insurgency, Stability operations and FID have been calculated by the DOD to require exceptionally large numbers of troops:

In Bosnia... the Pentagon had used a formula of one soldier for every 50 Bosnians. In Iraq that calculation added up to 300,000 troops. The Defense Department countered Shinseki by saying that Iraq was very different from Bosnia when it came to troop needs. "There has been none of the record in Iraq of ethnic militias fighting one another that produced so much bloodshed and permanent scars in Bosnia, along with a continuing requirement for large peacekeeping forces to separate those militias," Wolfowitz insisted.<sup>145</sup>

Wolfowitz was ironically prescient in his denial, citing the need for peacekeeping forces to deal with militias. Traditional warfare thinking insists there will be no aftermath or guerrilla

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<sup>144</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, “Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 83.

<sup>145</sup> Nicolaus Mills, ‘Punished for telling truth about Iraq war,’ CNN, Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2013/03/20/opinion/mills-truth-teller-iraq/index.html>.

activity, and the populace simply rolls over to accept their liberators without objection. Meanwhile the DOD has opted to extract itself from both long-term deployments and the IW methodology itself by placing the IW mission set on a force not properly aligned to it. The results have been unforgiving and lethal. US policy makers have leaned heavily on the USSOCOM enterprise over the course of two decades in what might well be deemed a continuance of the ‘Cult of the Operator’ mentality.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, SOF frequently have found themselves serving as the ‘Exit Strategy.’

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The effect of poor American IW strategy on policy and practitioners has been to blind the USG on critical matters such as budgets and operational effects. This has rendered America poorly enabled to execute IW, its most ubiquitous mode of conflict. Similar to the post-Vietnam era, shifting the impetus away from IW to *Multi-Domain Operations* must be considered a shift back to traditional warfare by the conventional forces for what may be less than appropriate reasons. Jones suggests that ‘this may be, in part, because the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps would prefer to spend their procurement dollars on big-ticket items like strategic bombers, stealth fighters, aircraft carriers, guided-missile destroyers and nuclear-powered attack submarines that are primarily designed for conventional or nuclear war.’<sup>147</sup> Soaring defense budgets appear particularly tone-deaf in the age of the Corona virus ravaging America and the world. It’s been known for some time that infectious diseases pose both national and global threats: the number of new diseases discovered per decade has increased four-fold since 1960

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<sup>146</sup> Alasdair Spark, ‘The Soldier at the Heart of the War: The Myth of the Green Beret in the Popular Culture of the Vietnam Era,’ *Journal of American Studies* 18, no. 1 (April 1984): 31-33.

Ulrica Pettersson and Eyal Ben-Ari, “‘Kill and Tell’: The Cultural Resonance and Reverberation of Creative Nonfiction on Special Operations Forces,” *Special Operations Journal* 4, (2018): 237.

<sup>147</sup> Seth Jones, ‘The Great Irregular Game,’ *The National Interest*, (September-October 2018): 63.

and the number of outbreaks per year has tripled since 1980.<sup>148</sup> Meanwhile, the nuclear triad of bombers, submarines and inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) can easily go without the suggested upgrade of ICBMs and still maintain the deterrent and retaliation capability needed.<sup>149</sup> President Trump's desired increase of 20% in nuclear weaponry budgets in the face of proposed budget cuts to the Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization and other public health agencies reveals ignorance (or lack of concern) regarding our true security threats.<sup>150</sup>

Another disturbing possibility is that the parochialism that derailed IW and SOF in previous decades is still at large in the DOD. It is worth noting that America's defense budget is larger than that of the next eleven countries in the world combined.<sup>151</sup> Hoffman noted of the US Navy in 2006:

By 2011, the carrier fleet will be able to strike over 10,000 targets a day. The battle line will grow to 84 ships, carrying nearly 9,000 battle force missiles. The SSN (nuclear-powered attack submarine) force will be joined by four capacious SSGNs (nuclear-powered guided-missile submarines); when they do, the battle force will have 1,000 covert vertical-launch system cells capable of firing a land-attack missile. *If anything, the fleet has too much usable strike capacity, paid for at the expense of other important capabilities, such as expeditionary maneuver and combat logistics* (emphasis is the author's).<sup>152</sup>

Groupthink is another possibility based on military organizations, and even SOF is embracing the US Army's Multi-Domain Operations.<sup>153</sup> The US Army's conception of IW remains anchored in Building Partner Capacity (BPC) and advisory missions that have proven

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<sup>148</sup> Bryan Walsh, 'The World is not Ready for the Next Pandemic,' Time, Time USA, LLC; last updated May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <https://time.com/4766624/next-global-security/>.

<sup>149</sup> Seth Jones, 'The Great Irregular Game,' *The National Interest*, (September-October 2018): 61-62.

<sup>150</sup> William D. Hartung, 'Now Isn't the Time to Push for Nuclear Modernization,' Defense News, Sightline Media Group, last updated 21 April 2020, <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2020/04/21/now-isnt-the-time-to-push-for-nuclear-modernization/>.

<sup>151</sup> Seth Jones, 'The Great Irregular Game,' *The National Interest*, (September-October 2018): 58.

<sup>152</sup> Frank G. Hoffman, 'Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs,' *Orbis*, (Summer, 2006): 407.

<sup>153</sup> US Army Special Operations Command, 'Army Special Operations Forces Support to the Multi-Domain Battle Concept,' Stand-To, US Army, accessed April 5th 2020, [https://www.army.mil/standto/archive\\_2017-08-29/](https://www.army.mil/standto/archive_2017-08-29/).

questionable at best, while the Irregular Warfare Center has been closed since 2014.<sup>154</sup> In frank terms, the DOD did not want IW or SOF, and has imposed the mission set it did not choose to recognize onto the force it did not choose to create. Ucko is unflinching in his assessment: ‘The US Army must question what force is needed for 21<sup>st</sup> century threats... Its plea for relevance now rests on the jargon of “multidomain battle” ... Seldom has so much jargon been deployed to say so little, but one thing is clear: counterinsurgency is out.’<sup>155</sup>

The evidence is plentiful: only one Professional Military Education (PME) institution teaches IW – the Naval Post-Graduate School, predominantly attended by SOF officers. There is no corollary agency to the National Counterterrorism Center to address IW at the interagency level of policy, once again demonstrating bias for kinetic response. PME taught in other institutions has meanwhile shifted to teaching traditional and nuclear warfare.<sup>156</sup>

Practitioners realize America is under threat; it is generally accepted that GPC is once again taking place, and America’s new concept of *Deterrence by Denial* is designed to address the GPC environment (replacing the war-on-two-fronts model known as *All Domain Dominance*).<sup>157</sup> This dynamic is captured in the National Security Strategy, which notes:

The United States must consider what is enduring about the problems we face, and what is new... Since the 1990s, the United States displayed a great degree of strategic complacency. We assumed that our military superiority was guaranteed and that a democratic peace was inevitable... In addition, after being dismissed as a phenomenon of an earlier century, great power competition returned. China and Russia began to reassert their influence regionally and globally. Today, they are fielding military capabilities designed to deny America access in times of crisis and to contest our ability to operate freely in critical commercial zones during

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<sup>154</sup> David H. Ucko, ‘Learning Difficulties: The US Way of Irregular Warfare,’ *Themenschwerpunkt* 36, (2018): 23. US Army, *Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-1 The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028*, edited by the Training and Doctrine Command Staff, 2018, 30.

<sup>155</sup> David H. Ucko, “Learning Difficulties: The US Way of Irregular Warfare,” *Themenschwerpunkt* 36, (2018): 23.

<sup>156</sup> Seth Jones, ‘The Great Irregular Game,’ *The National Interest*, (September-October 2018): 62 & 64.

<sup>157</sup> Ashley Townshend and Brendan Thomas-Noone and Matilda Steward, *Averting Crisis: US Defence Spending, Deterrence and the Indo-Pacific*, (Sydney: United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, 2019).

peacetime. In short, they are contesting our geopolitical advantages and trying to change the international order in their favor.<sup>158</sup>

However, logic demands that we address the threat as it is, not as we choose to envision it. Successful deterrence and denial in America's campaign plan will only result in a continued status quo. Traditional warfare as a mode of combat is the least likely course of action for an American opponent, be they state or non-state actors. The use of IW by a near-peer competitor would enable more than victory. It would exploit the Westphalian system for legitimacy within the community of nations. Virtually all nations, regardless of actual actions and intent (vis-à-vis colonialism, oppression, or genocide), will attempt to craft a message that displays acceptable levels of both righteousness and morality. In the case of Syria, Assad still maintained the status of a sovereign head of state, and used this position to continue a presence in the United Nations even in the light of brutal oppression of what began as peaceful uprisings.<sup>159</sup> This pretense slowed response and bred confusion while oppressing and abusing his own populace. By contrast, America adheres to Westphalian politics, which, in conjunction with the post-colonial system, demands that ongoing political models eschew seizure or capture of land from other countries. Per Clausewitz: 'War is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument, a continuation of political commerce, a carrying out of the same by other means.'<sup>160</sup> As such, the capture of enemy objectives is the least likely mission based on doctrine.

IW has been and will continue to be executed as *warfare of choice* by adversaries who cannot justify losing in traditional warfare or executed as *warfare of necessity* by those who

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<sup>158</sup> Donald J. Trump, National Strategic Strategy, 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

<sup>159</sup> Ufuk Ulutas, 'The Syrian Political Opposition: What Went Wrong,' *Insight Turkey* 18, no. 2 (Spring 2016): 31-39.

<sup>160</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, 'Clausewitz: War as Politics by other Means,' Online Library of Liberty, Liberty Fund, INC. last updated 13 April 2016, <https://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/clausewitz-war-as-politics-by-other-means>.

cannot address the US overmatch in defense posture. In *The Rise of the Present Unconventional Character of Warfare* this is driven home:

Operation Desert Storm demonstrated reliance on a massive but minimally trained army was insufficient against highly-trained forces with advanced weaponry... U.S. operations against Somali warlords demonstrated technological military advantage could be mitigated by irregular warfare... The West has obtained a credible conventional deterrent that adversaries would be lunatic to challenge. If the United States and NATO maintain superior military capabilities [the intent of GPC funding models], adversaries will avoid traditional conventional conflict.<sup>161</sup>

Max Boot updates the maxim of American dominance in traditional warfare to Operation Iraqi Freedom, noting: 'Given the United States' demonstrations of its mastery of conventional combat in Iraq in 1991 and 2003, few adversaries in the future will be foolish enough to put tank armies in the desert against an American force.'<sup>162</sup> Iran, Russia, and Pakistan have backed the Taliban as a proxy force and they have fought America to a stalemate that ended at the negotiation table, not the signing of formal surrender documents.<sup>163</sup> Policy makers must once again step in to ensure doctrine is followed by the military to secure American interests and popular sentiment through the use of IW.

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<sup>161</sup>Mike Fowler, 'The Rise of the Present Unconventional Character of Warfare,' Real Clear Defense, Real Clear Politics, last updated 4 November, 2019, [https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2019/11/04/the\\_rise\\_of\\_the\\_present\\_unconventional\\_character\\_of\\_warfare\\_114828.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2019/11/04/the_rise_of_the_present_unconventional_character_of_warfare_114828.html).

<sup>162</sup>Max Boot, 'The Evolution of Irregular War: Insurgents and Guerrillas From Akkadia to Afghanistan,' Foreign Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2013-02-05/evolution-irregular-war>.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 62.

## Chapter 2 – Be the Change you Wish to See in the World

Can IW tactics dictate the outcome of these military campaigns in place of a true strategy? The second chapter of this thesis will discuss IW and how it has shaped outcomes through the context of insurgency, terrorism, and VEOs. VEOs are noted as one of the threats in the NDS, and their use of insurgency and terror is not new. As the two dominant IW tactics, insurgency has received very different responses than terrorism. This may be a matter of context more than anything else. The definition of terrorism has been re-hashed, re-visited, and continually rebuffed to the point that it is virtually an endless argument. Numerous authors have identified critical components of the rhetoric, context, and history associated with the term. At the end of the discussion there are few points agreed upon, thus giving terrorism another deliberate treatment would unnecessarily lengthen this paper. As such this paper will discuss the subject using the guidelines identified by Assaf Moghadam, Ronit Berger and Polina Beliakova in their paper *Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent: Labeling and Analyzing Contemporary Terrorist*



*Actors*. They essentially boil down the problem to one of insurgency, which is disturbing given America's preference for kinetic CT operations and abandonment of COIN.<sup>164</sup>

Insurgents use terrorism as a tool to capture the imagination of those they need to impress with the importance of their struggle. Propaganda, demonstrations, political mobilization of the populace, subversion, insurrection, guerilla warfare and conventional warfare are other TTPs cited.<sup>165</sup> The point of terrorism as defined by Moghadam, et al, is that guerilla warfare or insurgent operations target uniformed forces of the opposition, while terrorism is used to target civilians or those not engaged in combat, for the express purpose of spectacle and psychological impact.<sup>166</sup>

This chapter examines two case studies: the first is Algeria as an insurgency. It addresses the shift between IW and traditional warfare, tactical innovation as faux strategy and policy failure through half-measures. The second case study is the terrorism of the PLO. It addresses the PLO's global effects on military operations and vast networks established in their terror campaign. Finally, this chapter examines the failure to address ideology and how doctrine has evolved almost by default in dealing with VEOs. In conclusion this chapter provides policy recommendations as well as a theory development concept based on current IW definitions, and recommends that ideology and doctrine must be addressed without false labels.

## **I.     INSURGENCY: ALGERIA**

The Algerian revolution meets the criteria of insurgency for the purposes of this paper in the literature. Algeria's insurrection is outlined as a critical point in both Algerian and French

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<sup>164</sup> Assaf Moghadam, Ronit Berger and Polina Beliakova, "Say Terrorist, Think Insurgent: Labeling and Analyzing Contemporary Terrorist Actors," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8, no. 5 (October 2014): 4.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 5.

history and cited as a classic example of insurgency owing specifically to its colonial aspect.<sup>167</sup> Indeed, groups as diverse as the Black Panthers, the Provisional Irish Republican Army, the Weather Underground, the Red Brigades, the Baader-Meinhof gang, and the Tamil Tigers, as well as numerous state military elements, are known to have screened *The Battle of Algiers* for its insight into insurgent warfare.<sup>168</sup>

Algeria was a holdover of the Imperial Age of European Colonization and France brutally abused the Algerians both politically and economically, despite their having incorporated Algeria into France. French colonists owned the vast majority of property in Algeria and dominated the Algerian political scene. Algerians on the other hand paid 70% of all taxes while only earning 20% of the national income in 1954. Only after four years of warfare and the election of Charles De Gaulle in 1958 did Algerians first receive the right to vote in French elections, even though official French policy was that ‘Algeria is France.’<sup>169</sup>

Such abuse was mild compared to that meted out by the French military throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century however, when atrocities such as massacres of indigenous people occurred. One such incident was the killing of 500 people in the caves surrounding the town of Dahra.<sup>170</sup> With such history the presence of subversives in both Algeria and mainland France throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century is unsurprising; however, it is generally left uncovered in literature. The Etoile Nord-

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<sup>167</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill and Molly Dunigan, *Paths to Victory* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013), 75.

<sup>168</sup> Gary Crowdus and Saadi Yacef, ‘Terrorism and Torture in The Battle of Algiers: An Interview with Saadi Yacef,’ *Cinéaste* 29, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 36. *The Battle of Algiers* is a documentary-styled, 1965 film classic by Gillo Pontecorvo about the urban warfare that took place in the capitol of Algeria. It stars former guerrilla Saadi Yacef (who went on to become an Algerian Senator), essentially playing himself. Yacef notes that the film served ‘as a kind of manual by revolutionary organizations throughout the world,’ though he believes the uniqueness of Algeria’s situation made that an unwise choice.

<sup>169</sup> Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* (New York: The New York Review of Books, 1977), Kindle Reader Location 2010.

<sup>170</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, “Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 73.

Africain (ENA) was founded in 1926 after the first World War and serves as an excellent example of how social movements in the populace spread across mainland France amidst increasing discontent in the Algerian population.<sup>171</sup>

Terrorism was plentiful and used by virtually every party in this campaign. The initial attacks launched by the Front de Liberation National (FLN) failed to inspire the support of the indigenous people of Algeria. The FLN prodded them on to submission and compliance by attacking Muslims who aided or worked for European settlers, attacking the French security apparatus, and randomly assassinating settlers.<sup>172</sup> Further, the European settlers later succumbed to the concept of vigilante justice and attacked countless Muslim Algerians. And the French Army carried out a well-documented campaign of torture, including beatings, drownings, and executions.<sup>173</sup> Algerian-born French Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus famously noted:

We ought to condemn with equal force and in the bluntest of terms the terrorism practiced by the FLN against French civilians and, even more frequently, Arab civilians. This terrorism is a crime, which can be neither excused or allowed to develop. In the form in which it is currently practiced, no revolutionary movement has ever tolerated it, and the Russian terrorists of 1905 would sooner have died (as they proved) than to stoop to such tactics. It is wrong to transform the injustices endured by the Arab people into a systematic indulgence of those who indiscriminately murder Arab and French civilians without regard to age or sex.<sup>174</sup>

The use of propaganda by the FLN was clearly effective, and Galula specifies that their use of it far surpassed that of the French counterinsurgency effort.<sup>175</sup> The long-festering

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<sup>171</sup> Neil MacMaster, 'The Algerian Café-Hotel, Hub of the Nationalist Underground, Paris 1926–1962,' *French Politics, Culture & Society* 34, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 59.

<sup>172</sup> David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2006) Kindle Reader Location 100-108.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence – An International Security History* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014) 188.

<sup>175</sup> David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2006) Kindle Reader Location 100-123.

Algerian-born population of migrant workers in France were targeted by pro-Algerian propaganda – cafes and hotels were commonly canvassed to round up support.<sup>176</sup> Likewise the global media served to spread pro-Algerian propaganda; the sight of atrocities committed, including wounded women and children in the world news, served as fodder for the global outrage over suppression of the colony's freedoms.<sup>177</sup> One famous literary patron was Germaine Tillon, a French ethnologist well-acquainted with Algeria. Having served as a Resistance fighter for the French in WWII, her pedigree and voice were a damning indictment of the position of the French. She wrote of her meetings with Saadi Yacef in her book *Les Ennemis Complémentaires*, detailing how she had convinced the FLN leader to declare a cease fire out of compassion for the wounded.<sup>178</sup> Similar propaganda victories were in short supply for the French.

Demonstrations became commonplace both in France and Algeria, as people rallied on both sides of the cause. In France, the Algerian-born migrant population supported their homeland marching in crowds up to 14,000-strong.<sup>179</sup> French clergy and academia spoke up as well, waging letter-writing campaigns.<sup>180</sup> On the other side of the conflict, Algeria suffered riots by European colonists protesting the French departure from Algeria estimated to be 30,000-strong.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Neil MacMaster, 'The Algerian Café-Hotel, Hub of the Nationalist Underground, Paris 1926–1962,' *French Politics, Culture & Society* 34, no. 2 (Summer 2016): 59.

<sup>177</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 76.

<sup>178</sup> Gary Crowdus and Saadi Yacef, 'Terrorism and Torture in The Battle of Algiers: An Interview with Saadi Yacef,' *Cinéaste* 29, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 36.

<sup>179</sup> Neil MacMaster, 'Identifying "Terrorists" in Paris: A Police Experiment with IBM Machines during the Algerian War,' *French Politics, Culture & Society* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2010): 38.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>181</sup> Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* (New York: The New York Review of Books, 1977), Kindle Reader Location 3040.

While subversion of the French rule of Algeria proper is an important discussion, what is less obvious is the subversion of French rule within its own borders. Algerian migrant populations were kept hidden from government social systems that served both overt French administrative purposes and also covertly tracked the migrants. Welfare, medical, pensions, and housing services offered by traditional French agencies were nullified by the establishment of ‘shadow’ government efforts of the FLN. By providing these services through their own network of commercial shop-owners and hoteliers (all sympathetic to the Algerian cause, by natural or artificial inclination) the FLN both obscured their people and networks and acted in the place of the French government, securing their authority to the populace.<sup>182</sup> As Bernard B. Fall observed ‘when a country is being subverted it is not being outfought; it is being outadministered (sic).’<sup>183</sup>

It is a short leap from subversion to insurrection, and having had decades to foment feelings of rebellion, the movement took life in 1954. By means of both guerilla and conventional warfare, the FLN brought the fight to the French. As an insurgency movement, the FLN utilized the pre-existing social and commercial networks of Algerian dissidents in France to create a political mobilization of the populace with masterful effect. Since World War I, there were a large number of Algerian migrants in France who were dissatisfied with the status quo, but the FLN didn’t rest there. By targeting ‘neutral’ Algerian business owners in France and then intimidating them into submission, they added these numbers to those already supporting the rebellion. Injecting their brand of political activism into a well-established fringe population within metropolitan French cities allowed for recruiting of fighters, essentially mirroring today’s *Foreign Fighter* networks by mobilizing these supporters to execute their missions. It also

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<sup>182</sup> Neil MacMaster, ‘Identifying “Terrorists” in Paris: A Police Experiment with IBM Machines during the Algerian War,’ *French Politics, Culture & Society* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2010): 28.

<sup>183</sup> Dr. Sebastian Gorka, “How America Will Be Attacked: Irregular Warfare, the Islamic State, Russia, and China,” *Military Review* 33, no. 3 (September-October 2016): 34.

increased financial and logistical support and provided a form of safe-haven for rest and recuperation away from the established battleground as an *External Haven*.<sup>184</sup>

**a. TACTICAL SHIFTS: ALL WARFARE IS HYBRID**

In the Algerian campaign, the discussion of advanced TTPs centers around the French. Numerous instances of cross-border operations by the FLN serve as an example of guerilla warfare. When the FLN sought refuge in neighboring countries it led to the development of an effective TTP by the French, one reminiscent of the Warsaw Ghetto. Walling off an entire border is clearly a topic of interest today seen in both Israel and American political debates. The Morice Line, as it was called, was the French answer to border control. It served as a hardening of defenses along the Algerian border, which led to an interesting turn of events. In a tribute to its effectiveness, it trapped Algerian sympathizers in Tunisia. The FLN then transitioned from IW to traditional warfare, launching a failed campaign to breach the wall from March to May of 1958. The casualties suffered were 3,000 and the remaining 20,000 fighters were left to sit out the conflict until the completion of the war.<sup>185</sup>

The FLN used Algerian social and commercial networks in mainland France (referred to today as Human Terrain) to subvert government services and increase the mobility of rebels from Europe to Africa (similar to today's migration issues). In response the French seized upon a TTP that had been used in Europe previously as a means of census recording. Since the 1890s (quite

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<sup>184</sup> Neil MacMaster, 'Identifying "Terrorists" in Paris: A Police Experiment with IBM Machines during the Algerian War,' *French Politics, Culture & Society* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2010): 28. *Foreign Fighters and External Support* are common facets of IW. Where militaries are frequently hamstrung by border agreements between state actors, irregulars and non-state actors have the ability to cross into neighboring states sympathetic to their cause and receive supplies, relief, haven, etc. Likewise, such nearby countries in the past were the frequent source of non-native irregular combatants, which evolved with the age of global travel into the *Foreign Fighter* phenomenon.

<sup>185</sup> H. Canuel, 'French Counterinsurgency in Algeria: Forgotten Lessons from a Misunderstood Conflict,' *Small Wars Journal*, Small Wars Journal, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/french-counterinsurgency-in-algeria>.

clearly in response to the Anarchist campaign that fatally claimed the lives of multiple heads of state during the same time-frame) punch-card machines had been used to track large groups of people such as in a census or for large demographic criteria.<sup>186</sup> The IBM punch-card machines used to collate this data were now geared towards *profiling* of terror suspects and proved a significant tool to the police intelligence functions.

Dossiers were compiled on individuals with varying degrees of success, but this clearly laid the path for many of today's tools such as biometrics, battlefield DNA collection and identification, and forensic analysis. The Berillon system recorded numerous points, both demographic and biometric, to include: physiological measurements, photographs, fingerprints, gender, age, marriage status, literacy, housing, rent, and wages. Such actions were a natural response to the exploitation of the migrant populace's ability to drift from job to job and maintain anonymity.<sup>187</sup>

Further TTP advances in responding to the Algerian terror threat were more tactical in nature. So successful were the helicopter warfare advances pioneered by the French that they directly influenced the operational design of the United States military effort in Vietnam, which then propagated globally to become accepted doctrine.<sup>188</sup> Helicopter warfare was first devised and operationally tested in Indochina by the French as they utilized various airframes for logistic and medical operations. However, in Algeria they advanced the concept; Colonel Felix Brunet is credited with the first instance of arming a helicopter for use as a gunship. In 1955, French troops were pinned down by rebels in the Atala Mountain range south of Algiers; Brunet placed

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<sup>186</sup> Neil MacMaster, 'Identifying "Terrorists" in Paris: A Police Experiment with IBM Machines during the Algerian War,' *French Politics, Culture & Society* 28, no. 3 (Winter 2010): 28.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>188</sup> John P. Cann, 'Lessons in airpower projection: Indochina and Algeria,' *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 24, no. 1 (2013): 103.

a machine-gunner in each casualty transport pod of a Bell H-47 helicopter. The fire delivered from the aerial vantage point of the aircraft allowed for French troops, who had been pinned down by rebels firing from an elevated position, to dislodge them and move on to their objective.<sup>189</sup> Similarly, the French went on to utilize advanced air combat TTPs such as Close Air Support (CAS) to crush the rebels again and again tactically.<sup>190</sup> Notably, these tactical advances delivered the victory in battle but gave no advantage to the French's strategic position in global politics.

#### **b. POLICY OVERREACH WITHOUT THE FULL INTENT TO EXECUTE THE MISSION**

The previous decades had ravaged the morale and esprit de corps of the French Army, having suffered brutal losses in Indochina, Morocco, Tunisia and the Suez Canal.<sup>191</sup> The French forces were fresh out of their routing in Indochina. Schrepel notes:

The Indochina War (1946–1954) created a watershed within the professional army. The burden for the war increasingly fell on the shoulders of the few. The paratroops—or “paras” as they were called—became the army's most reliable, crack troops. In many a battle, paratroop units fought outnumbered in the war's sharpest fighting. The pivotal battle of Dienbienphu (Sic) (1953–1954) epitomized their skill and sacrifice. In 1954, the theater commander dropped airborne battalions into a Vietnamese jungle valley. For 7 months, they stood alone against greatly superior numbers, only to be abandoned and crushed during weeks of grueling siege warfare.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> John P. Cann, 'Lessons in airpower projection: Indochina and Algeria,' *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 24, no. 1 (2013): 123.

<sup>190</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0 Joint Operations, edited by the Joint Staff, 2018, ix. Close Air Support is action by fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft against hostile targets that are in close proximity to friendly forces and that require detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces.

<sup>191</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill and Molly Dunigan, *Paths to Victory*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013), 77.

<sup>192</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 74.



The Paras, in particular, suffered the surrender of 11,000 troops following the defeat at Dien Bien Phu; of these only 3,290 returned from the Communist prison camps where they were tortured and *re-educated*.<sup>193</sup> It goes without saying that these men should not have been sent back to combat, however these same men were sent to Algeria and proved to be adept students of their Viet Minh cadre. Paul Teitgen was a local official in Algeria who'd survived Dachau and noted on detainees of the French 'profound traces of the cruelty and tortures that I had personally suffered fourteen years ago in the Gestapo cellars.'<sup>194</sup> The tactical success of saving the capital city of Algiers was delivered by the Paras, and largely built upon intelligence gained by such torture. These revelations revulsed the world and eroded any remaining support for France, prompting Teitgen to remark 'All right, [10<sup>th</sup> Para Division Commander, Major General Jacques] Massu won the Battle of Algiers, but that meant losing the war.'<sup>195</sup>

During the period immediately following WWII and through the Indochina War, the Communists and Socialists were major French political parties. They actively undermined the Indochina War effort, hoping instead to enjoy a peace dividend.<sup>196</sup> They were openly and aggressively antagonistic to the French military, denouncing them as 'war criminals,' using labor unions to conduct sabotage, and sowing discord. The French public took this to heart with protests and boycotts; for example, civilian blood banks would not donate to the military.<sup>197</sup> Schrepel elaborates how these effects carried over into the Algerian effort:

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<sup>193</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 74.

<sup>194</sup> Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence – An International Security History* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014) 189.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 74.

<sup>197</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 79-80.

...the Mendes-France (1954–1955) and Mollet governments (1956–1957) largely performed triage and could not remedy institutional weaknesses that had rendered the army technically, strategically, and morally unable to achieve national political objectives. In a nutshell, Paris committed the army to unwinnable wars in France's name without providing the proper support to win and win with honor... the government took steps that slighted the army precisely at the time when Paris committed it to a period of continuous war from 1946–1962.<sup>198</sup>

In the developing post-Colonial age, they were on the wrong side of history. France knew it and initially committed *as little as possible to the effort*, only clinging to Algeria out of their own battered sense of pride.<sup>199</sup> Though they later succeeded tactically, they failed to grasp that the age of colonialism was over, and this strategic political truth overpowered any other operational or tactical consideration.<sup>200</sup>

## **II. TERRORISM: PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION**

The second case study discusses the PLO and their use of terrorism. Per the criteria of insurgency for the purposes of this paper, there are some aspects that simply fail to be met. With both sides having used terror as a tool, it stands to reason that effective political strategies, more than tactical TTPs, were responsible for the end state. The Arabs utilized a losing strategy that saw them fighting against the tide of history, trying to denounce the victims of a recent globally known and acknowledged genocide. Unfortunately for the Palestinian Arabs, the world was more than happy to let the Israelis keep their land, and the Palestinian Arabs are effectively trapped in the ghettos of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

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<sup>198</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 74.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>200</sup> David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2006) Kindle Reader Location 3824.

Palestine as a historic land was caught up in the last throes of European colonialism at the end of World War I. It was ruled by Turkey for hundreds of years, whose alliance with the losing Germans and Austro-Hungarians left Palestinian destiny unclear. France claimed the northern lands now known as Lebanon and Syria, but the area most clearly identified with modern Palestine fell to Britain, who had backed both the uprising of Arabs against their Turkish rulers and, counterintuitively, the return of Semitic peoples to Palestine.<sup>201</sup> Thus, the stage was set for two diametrically opposed populations to vie for control of the land, virtually guaranteeing conflict, subversion, and guerilla warfare.

From the earliest days, both forces embraced terrorism as a means to an end, with the elements in power having long history back to the days of Mandatory Palestine under British rule. Jews used the same tactics in Mandatory Palestine against the British as did the Palestinian Arabs, and to greater effect. Menachem Begin, Israeli Prime Minister from 1977-83, led the Irgun Zvai Le'umi (or National Military Organization), who bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem during July of 1946 and hung two British Sergeants in July of 1947 while he was in command. They also conducted attacks against unarmed civilian populaces.<sup>202</sup>

The brutal humiliation of four Arab nations (Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt) attacking and losing to the fledgling state of Israel a day after its declaration of statehood (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1948) surely fueled bloodlust in Palestinian Arabs for decades. Following the victory of Israel in the 1948 War, small-scale guerilla attacks by various factions became the norm until 1964.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Michael A. Innes, 'Deconstructing Political Orthodoxies on Insurgent and Terrorist Sanctuaries,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, (2008): 25.

<sup>202</sup> Bansidhar Pradhan, 'Terrorism as an Instrument of Armed Struggle and Diplomacy: The Changing Face of the PLO,' *International Studies* 38, no. 4 (2001): 397.

<sup>203</sup> Michael A. Innes, 'Deconstructing Political Orthodoxies on Insurgent and Terrorist Sanctuaries,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, (2008): 26.

Millions of Palestinian Arabs fled as refugees in the meantime, creating crisis events in surrounding countries, who then bore the burden of both the military loss and the human aftermath. It became politically problematic for these countries to openly acknowledge the Fedayeen, as these guerillas called themselves. With the creation of the PLO in 1964, there existed both a means to put a softer face on the Anti-Zionist movement and a means to unite the various parties fighting Israel.<sup>204</sup> In this way their creation was terrorism but also directly tied to a political end state: the destruction of the Israeli state. Backed by the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, creating the PLO served initially to bring Muslims in Israel into to the Pan-Arab movement.<sup>205</sup> Egypt's patronage would last for years, but eventually fail over time.

The first armed wing of the PLO, known as the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA), had a conventional Order of Battle (OB) built around artillery and tank units.<sup>206</sup> By June of 1967 it became clear through the second large-scale defeat of Arab military forces by Israel that the PLO could not count on conventional warfare solutions to solve their problems. The Six-Day War resulted in Israel's seizing the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.<sup>207</sup> Further to this point, the PLO assessed that it would take years to match the tactical prowess of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Choosing IW, they used terrorism to raise finances, free prisoners, draw in recruits, and execute 'Propaganda by Deed' putting the Palestinian dilemma on the world stage.<sup>208</sup> Moreover, in selecting terrorism and not insurgency, they

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<sup>204</sup> Bansidhar Pradhan, 'Terrorism as an Instrument of Armed Struggle and Diplomacy: The Changing Face of the PLO,' *International Studies* 38, no. 4 (2001): 398.

<sup>205</sup> Ogen S. Goldman, 'Between self-interest and international norms: legitimizing the PLO,' *Israel Affairs* 19, No. 2 (2013): 365.

<sup>206</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, 'Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement,' *Journal of International Affairs* 32, no. 1 (1978): 21.

<sup>207</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 32-33.

<sup>208</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 61-62.

avoided the efforts required to conduct true guerilla warfare based on the populace as a center of gravity. The heavy lifting of prerequisite political, psychological and organizational preparation of a population not fully prepared to embrace the cause was evidently a bridge too far.<sup>209</sup> This serves as a historical proof of concept for IW superseding traditional warfare when confronting a superior foe with an inferior force.

However, 1967 also brought the opportunity to turn a tactical defeat into a propaganda victory. The March 21<sup>st</sup> battle at Karamah, a PLO-specific camp inside the borders of Jordan, allowed the PLO to claim that 300 Fatah fighters held off 15,000 IDF forces in a victory reminiscent of the Spartans at Thermopylae. Though this is a gross exaggeration, it did mark the first time the IDF and PLO clashed in conventional battle. That the IDF withdrew at nightfall after one day of fighting displayed a significant change in outcome from the hugely one-sided victory Israel had previously experienced. The point was not lost on a Palestinian Arab populace desperate for something to celebrate.<sup>210</sup>

This propaganda victory provided secondary effects used by the PLO to justify their move to terror-based operations; as an example of both the recruitment benefits and the political mobilization of the population required for continued successes, 5,000 recruits joined Fatah after Karamah. This would repeat itself after the Munich attacks, with thousands recruited after that world-wide spectacle.<sup>211</sup> The PLO would realize significant difficulty mobilizing support from their own populace within the occupied territories of Gaza, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights

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<sup>209</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, 'Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement,' *Journal of International Affairs* 32, no. 1 (1978): 38-39.

<sup>210</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 67.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

and the West Bank. The refugee camps in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan did maintain good support, however.<sup>212</sup>

In 1968 the PLO made clear its transition to terror-based operations by electing a leader from the Fedayeen group known as Al Fatah. Mohammed ‘Yasser’ Arafat took control of the PLO and solidified the means of ‘armed struggle’ as the primary tool to achieve its end state. Likewise, the Palestine National Council (PNC) adopted a Palestinian National Charter in July 1968 of which Article 10 stated that commando action to sustain guerilla operations was critical.<sup>213</sup> For the next two decades the PLO would prove that terrorism was a viable tool in both military and political terms.<sup>214</sup>

In terms of political subversion or insurrection the PLO was at best a mixed success and at worst a failure. The PLO’s general lack of structure beyond some cellular security-based requirements rendered them unable to manage their own forces, execute reliable command and control, or penetrate Israeli-occupied areas. They never overcame their factionalized origins and frequently served different Arab-state patrons while living in these host nations.<sup>215</sup> Eventually, this failure of cohesive command and control led to the overthrow of the Palestinian Authority by Hamas in Gaza.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Bard E. O’Neill, ‘Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement,’ *Journal of International Affairs* 32, no. 1 (1978): 41.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p 24

<sup>214</sup> Bansidhar Pradhan, ‘Terrorism as an Instrument of Armed Struggle and Diplomacy: The Changing Face of the PLO,’ *International Studies* 38, no. 4 (2001): 382.

<sup>215</sup> Bard E. O’Neill, ‘Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement,’ *Journal of International Affairs* 32, no. 1 (1978): 40.

<sup>216</sup> Conal Urquhart, Ian Black and Mark Tran, ‘Hamas takes control of Gaza,’ *The Guardian*, Guardian News & Media Limited, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jun/15/israel4>.

The lack of cohesion serves as one reflection of leadership, while another is the reports of Arafat's hoarding of wealth while he abandoned the people he claimed to champion.<sup>217</sup>

Generally leadership was in short supply throughout Palestine's campaign, as suggested by poor execution of doctrine. Bard O'Neill describes their efforts as a failed conceptualization of the military focused Cuban guerilla campaign, where party structure is developed after the guerilla campaign is launched (with the presumption being that the campaign becomes successfully self-supportive, allowing space and time for the development of a political arm). O'Neill further suggests a reason for failure: the Palestinians didn't grasp that Castro's efforts against Batista pitted his guerillas against a weak political system, while the PLO faced a strong enemy with high morale in Israel.<sup>218</sup>

#### **a. THE PLO'S EFFECT ON GLOBAL MILITARY OPERATIONS**

Two significant courses of action stand out in discussing advancements of TTPs executed by the PLO. The first is the revolutionary usage of hijacking in what is credited as the first modern act of terrorism.<sup>219</sup> To be certain the PLO were not the only hijackers flying the unfriendly skies; from 1960 to 1972 approximately 17,000 US passengers and crew had been hijacked.<sup>220</sup> The PLO, however, found a way to politicize the act, and in doing so launched it into a higher realm of consequence. The hijacking of an Israeli El Al flight from Rome to Tel Aviv on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1968, by Palestinians of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP, a PLO-aligned group) marked the first time an organization had hijacked across

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<sup>217</sup> Rees, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,782141,00.html>

<sup>218</sup> Bard E. O'Neill, 'Towards a Typology of Political Terrorism: The Palestinian Resistance Movement,' *Journal of International Affairs* 32, no. 1 (1978): 37.

<sup>219</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 65.

<sup>220</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 43.

international borders for political means instead of standard money-driven air piracy.<sup>221</sup> This plot quickly illustrated the danger of hosting the PLO in one's country however, as the Israelis destroyed 13 planes in the Beirut airport as retaliation for El Al hijackings.<sup>222</sup>

The second significant course of action in advancing TTPs was the first globally broadcasted terror event in history; an estimated 900 million people watched the massacre at the Munich Olympics on TV in 1972.<sup>223</sup> It was the first return of the Olympics to Germany since the Nazi regime hosted the 1936 Olympics, and security was intentionally side-lined in favor of a carefree bohemian feel to appeal to the masses.<sup>224</sup> The Black September Organization, a covert arm of Arafat's Al Fatah within the PLO, had little trouble penetrating the low-security Olympic village.<sup>225</sup> They even received a guided tour of team housing by an Israeli athlete and had help carrying in their guns and ammunition by an American athlete.<sup>226</sup>

Munich's security footing stands in stark contrast to today's environment, but even then, the entire attack was predicted nearly to the letter, as recounted in chilling detail by Graff in *The Threat Matrix*:

...Dr. Georg Sieber, a West German police psychologist, had walked through twenty-six different scenarios for possible trouble. Situation 21 had focused on Palestinian terrorists storming the Israeli compound, killing hostages, and demanding the release of their counterparts in Israeli jails and a plane to make their escape to an Arab country.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 43.

<sup>222</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 70.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 28-31.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>225</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, 'A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,' (master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 66.

<sup>226</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 39-40.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 40.



The resulting debacle pitted untrained police hunting enthusiasts with personal weapons from home against terrorists with explosives and AK-47s. The untrained volunteer assault force abandoned the mission before arriving at their objective, leaving police marksmen (the aforementioned hunters with personal rifles) to deal with a contingency that was almost certainly not in the plan. Nine Israeli athletes and four Palestinian terrorists died at the end of the 20-hour disaster, and governments around the world collectively realized two things: first, they too had exactly zero response prepared for such an event.<sup>228</sup> Second, going forward there must be a plan in place to respond to such an attack.

In the aftermath, the West Germans quickly moved to establish Grenzschutzgruppe Neun (GSG-9)<sup>229</sup>; the French followed suit with Groupe d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale (GIGN)<sup>230</sup>, and Britain re-missioned Special Air Service (SAS) troops to respond to CT crises. All would be readily employed in short order.<sup>231</sup>

The US response was predictably complex. As the previous entries mention, these were primarily police elements to handle interior threats to citizenry. Likewise, the US had established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams in metropolitan and urban centers, with the Los Angeles Police Departments considered to be the originator of the concept in 1967 as a response to the Watts riots.<sup>232</sup> Owing to the size of the US, it is obvious that a single national element

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<sup>228</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 43.

<sup>229</sup> Ben Knight, 'Germany expands anti-terror squad GSG 9,' DW, DeutscheWelt, last updated 15 January 2018, <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-expands-anti-terror-squad-gsg-9/a-42148371>.

<sup>230</sup> Paul Peachey, 'Who are GIGN? Elite police force formed after 1972 Olympics attack on Israelis,' Independent, Independent Digital News and Media Limited, last updated 9 January 2015, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/who-are-gign-elite-police-force-formed-after-1972-olympics-attack-on-israelis-9969163.html>.

<sup>231</sup> Michael A. Innes, 'Deconstructing Political Orthodoxies on Insurgent and Terrorist Sanctuaries,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, (2008): 31.

<sup>232</sup> 'S.W.A.T.,' Los Angeles Police Department, LAPD Foundation, accessed July 20th, 2020, [http://www.lapdonline.org/inside\\_the\\_lapd/content\\_basic\\_view/848](http://www.lapdonline.org/inside_the_lapd/content_basic_view/848).

would be hard pressed at best to respond to anything but the most exceptional crisis. The Federal Bureau of Investigation Hostage Rescue Team (FBI HRT) was developed after the Hanafi Muslim sect took over the Washington DC city hall in 1977.<sup>233</sup> FBI leadership assessed their options after the event, including usage of SFOD-D which had been working towards achieving Full Operational Capability all the while. Delta was seen as being entirely combat oriented and unlikely to succeed in an arrest warrant scenario (where suspects retain protection under the US Constitution), and presented further challenges related to the Posse Comitatus act. It was these points that resulted in the HRT being stood up (with direct input by Colonel Charles Beckwith, the principal architect of Delta Force). Thus, the highly specialized FBI HRT handles internal hostage scenarios on US soil, while the SFOD-D responds to American hostage scenarios overseas. The US Navy Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU, commonly known as SEAL Team Six) was created later in the 1980s, with an initial mission set of hostage rescue specific to underway vessels at sea.<sup>234</sup>

What becomes clear upon analyzing the cause and effect in play, is that the advancement and brinksmanship of terror tactics executed by the PLO and their various organizations pushed the world to a new level of response in CT operations. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this point – the twin courses of action, political weaponization of hijacking and spectacle-based political murder on mass media (making the terrorist label somewhat superfluous) changed the operational environment forever. The American CT units (that in part or in whole exist owing to US responses to these actions) have reshaped America's entire DOD methodology in 21st century combat. No facet of combat operations is untouched by the TTPs, Research and

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<sup>233</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 73.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

Development (R&D), Logistics, Acquisition, and Joint Operations models shaped by the successes enjoyed by these CT elements. Individuals (not just organizations or nation-states) are now targeted effectively, lethally, and globally via drone strikes built upon entire networks of intelligence collection operating in near-real time... all of which grew out of the response to terrorism discussed here. Such massive investment of time and money demands a return, and as such the American DOD bias towards kinetic response is not surprising.

It is noteworthy that the Black September Organization claim the Munich attack as a success, and as previously discussed, the propaganda value was undeniable in both publicity and recruitment value. Politically speaking it is assessed by scholars to be successful as well, in that no more than two years later Arafat was invited to address the UN General Assembly. Shortly following the PLO was granted 'Special Observer' status by the UN. No less than 86 countries established political relations with the PLO during the 1970s.<sup>235</sup> Of course there is no hard and fast evidence that the PLO achieved these goals by virtue of their terrorism, as the UN certainly couldn't admit to that, but the effect is undeniable.

But if it is that politics, not tactical victories, more frequently decides winners and losers in conflicts, then surely it was not the PLO's terrorism that won the day for them. Their advanced TTPs drove development of CT elements that have wrought havoc for decades upon terror networks globally (including their own), but still their political efforts prospered. That said, if the PLO roundly deny that they were a terror organization, then their efforts and achievements must not be acknowledged as a result of their terror-based actions. This is losing

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<sup>235</sup> Michael A. Innes, 'Deconstructing Political Orthodoxies on Insurgent and Terrorist Sanctuaries,' *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31, (2008): 32.

the battle of propaganda. Their mastery of IW, however, provides numerous examples to learn from.

## **b. THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY**

Perhaps the most critical piece of the discussion is the legacy and future of the Palestinian terrorists. They served as a beacon to others that violence is not just acceptable but rewarded in international politics. Numerous secular, ethnic, and religious movements looked to them for examples of success. They are now known to have ‘created an extensive transnational extremist network -- tied into which were various state sponsors such as the Soviet Union, certain Arab states, as well as traditional criminal organizations. By the end of the 1970s, the Palestinian secular network was a major channel for the spread of terrorist techniques worldwide.’<sup>236</sup> Beyond carrying out terrorist attacks in the Middle East and Western Europe, the PLO (through Al Fatah) is known to have offered training in terrorist TTPs to a large swath of terrorists and insurgents across Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.<sup>237</sup> Hoffman notes that at least 40 different terrorist groups were trained by the PLO and adds North America as a point of origin; the PLO charged between \$5-10k for a six week course of training, and became one of the first terrorist groups to accumulate such wealth.<sup>238</sup>

In light of this networking of nefarious actors, it is no surprise that there are common threads running through both the Algerian and PLO scenarios which have since come to light. One is Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Pan-Arab nationalist president of Egypt. After the 1946 failure of the first band of Algerian rebels, Nasser gave them refuge in Egypt where they became

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<sup>236</sup> John Moore, ‘The Evolution of Islamic Terror: An Overview,’ Frontline-Target America, Public Broadcast Service, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/target/etc/modern.html>.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 80.

members of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>239</sup> Nasser inspired the creation and rebellion of the FLN, an amalgamation of Algerian rebel elements, and he must certainly have seen the same possibilities in the PLO's mix of Palestinian insurgent elements.<sup>240</sup> He served as the primary patron of the PLO from their inception and for many years. Algeria also provided training to Al-Fatah, which joined the PLO and was led by Arafat, who ultimately took over leadership of the PLO.<sup>241</sup>

The other linkage between the two groups is Communism, with China and the USSR specifically acting as patron states in the IW problem set. Ho Chi Minh, who defeated the French with his Viet Minh, is known to have been in close contact with the Chinese Communists both before and after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) defeated the Nationalists. Ho (whose real name was Nguyen Ai Quoc) had in fact been previously trained in the Soviet Union and was a long-time Communist.<sup>242</sup> The Chinese and Viet Minh routinely exchanged weapons, money, entire troop formations, officers, and importantly intelligence collection TTPs from 1945-49.<sup>243</sup> Thus it was that the TTPs of IW, and notably torture, passed from Chinese and Viet Minh Communists to the French through the brutal education of warfare. The French survivors of the Viet Minh prison camps passed it on to the Algerians.

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<sup>239</sup> H. Canuel, 'French Counterinsurgency in Algeria: Forgotten Lessons from a Misunderstood Conflict,' *Small Wars Journal*, Small Wars Journal, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/french-counterinsurgency-in-algeria>.

<sup>240</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill and Molly Dunigan, *Paths to Victory*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013), 77.

<sup>241</sup> James Adams, *The Financing of Terror*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 40.

<sup>242</sup> Claude G. Berube, *How American Operatives Saved the Man Who Started the Vietnam War*, HistoryNet.com, World History Group, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.historynet.com/how-american-operatives-saved-the-man-who-started-the-vietnam-war.htm>.

<sup>243</sup> Jiayi Gao, 'Fighting Side by Side: Cross-Border Military Exchanges and Cooperation Between the Chinese Communist Party and the Viet Minh, 1945-1949,' *The China Review* 19, no. 3 (August 2019): 123-148.

The Chinese also sponsored the PLO, providing doctrine, weapons, money and officer exchanges. Haaretz reported that ‘by 1967, the Palestinians were seemingly fighting almost exclusively with Chinese-made weaponry.’ Chinese support of the Palestinian cause pre-dates the PLO; they sent financial aid via Syria for refugees in 1960, as their first attempt to engage the Palestinian people. Chinese media also showed a marked increase in support following the first Arab League summit in 1964.<sup>244</sup> By 1968 PLO guerrillas were being trained in China, and Chinese weapons were shipped to their camps. By 1970 Arafat had flown to visit China and North Vietnam in search of funding and patronage (which he received, as did Muammar Gaddafi’s Libyan terror enterprise, whose representative was on the same airplane as Arafat).<sup>245</sup> The PLO insisted upon the leeway to entertain relations with both major Communist superpowers, which they achieved.<sup>246</sup> The Soviet Union sponsored the PLO once Yuri Andropov took power in 1967.<sup>247</sup>

The French fought Vietnamese Communists and lost as did America. This is all the more noteworthy because Ho served as a recruited agent of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS – precursor to the CIA) during WWII, as did several of his lieutenants.<sup>248</sup> One wonders if this information was available to General Westmoreland, who famously ignored the French IW experience in Indochina and Algeria (excepting certain tactical elements such as helicopter

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<sup>244</sup> Shaina Oppenheimer, *Weapons and Ideology: Files Reveal How China Armed and Trained the Palestinians*, Haaretz.com, Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd., accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium/MAGAZINE-how-china-became-the-palestinians-biggest-ally-in-the-1960s-1.7619544?v=1592065398944>.

<sup>245</sup> James Adams, *The Financing of Terror*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 42.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>247</sup> Hannah Mae Fransen, ‘A Comparative Study of German and Palestinian Revolutionary Terrorism,’ (master’s thesis, University of Ottawa, 2009), 71.

<sup>248</sup> Lloyd Shearer, ‘When Ho Chi Minh was an Intelligence Agent for the U.S.,’ Reading Room, Central Intelligence Agency, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90-01208R000100100053-4.pdf>.

Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence – An International Security History* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014) 186.

warfare) and then repeated their failures in Vietnam.<sup>249</sup> Some lessons of the French ring true through history, such as when General Navarre requested 50,000 troops for Algeria but was given only 20,000. This mirrors General Shenseki's experience in determining US troop strength for the Iraq invasion of 2003; he sought at least 300,000 but Rumsfeld opted for 145,000.<sup>250</sup> Such *policy overreach without the full intent to execute the mission* is a frequent hallmark of failure in IW.

Even after Vietnam the American DOD ignored IW until forced to address it (Munich), but overwhelmingly leaned to the kinetic, CT side of the terrorism problem set for its appeal as a quick and politically-spectacular solution more suitable to American doctrine. This policy failed to address the issues that keep people coming back to violence as a valid choice. As pointed out in West Point's IW podcast, tactical successes that achieve short-term security and stability do not equate to geo-political strategic success that maintains long-term peace.<sup>251</sup> In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, non-state actors have found a way to exploit this.

### III. IDEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) are the only non-state threat included in the NDS. The choice to use the word *extremist* is curious, as *terrorism* is already a perfectly good,

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<sup>249</sup> 'Interview with Col. David Hackworth, U.S. Army, South Vietnam,' *Guerrilla Wars*, People's Century, Public Broadcast Service, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury/episodes/guerrillawars/hackworthtranscript.html>.

<sup>250</sup> Walter A. Schrepel, "Paras and Centurions: Lessons Learned from the Battle of Algiers," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2005): 75.

Nicolaus Mills, 'Punished for telling truth about Iraq war,' CNN, Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2013/03/20/opinion/mills-truth-teller-iraq/index.html>.

<sup>251</sup> Dr. Jake Shapiro, 'What are Small Wars?,' May 21, 2020, in Irregular Warfare Podcast, by Princeton Empirical Studies of Conflict and West Point Modern Warfare Institute, podcast audio, 21:30, <https://mwi.usma.edu/introducing-irregular-warfare-podcast-episode-one-small-wars/>.

poorly defined word available for use. Indeed, any number of words could have been substituted: guerrilla, insurgent, rebel, etc...

Non-state actors (NSAs) have been known threats for decades, regardless of any claims to the contrary. As depicted in this paper, the PLO, Algerian rebels, and many more have been both hunted and courted by state actors throughout history. Numerous other authors have treated this subject, but another lens of examination is more critical: ideology. Ideology is to the Irregular Warrior as doctrine is to the military. It carries the specific aspect of being *actionable by the adherent*, guiding their beliefs but also their employment.<sup>252</sup> Thus, if one's ideology includes Jihad, certainly one can be expected to act on this imperative. Ideology and doctrine tell us who one is and why one acts; using a study of ideology (or doctrine) there is a baseline of how one's culture may choose to advance, operationally or otherwise.

There remains an inherent problem with the term VEO – though it is not inaccurate, neither is it accurate enough. Adherents to any number of belief systems may be deemed extremists. Extremism cannot stand the scrutiny of being defined – indeed, accomplished and prominent authors stand at odds as they attempt to capture its spirit. Allan, et al, note that 'Violent extremism is multi-factorial and extremely diverse: it cannot be predicted by one variable alone.'<sup>253</sup> However, Yahyayev and Sultanakhmedova stipulate 'the measures to eliminate the fundamental causes of extremism and its prevention measures should be

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<sup>252</sup> 'Joint Doctrine Publications,' Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Department of Defense, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.jcs.mil/Doctrine/Joint-Doctrine-Pubs/>

'Ideology,' Dictionary.com, Dictionary.com, LLC, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/ideology>

<sup>253</sup> Harriet Allan, Andrew Glazzard, Sasha Jespersen, Sneha Reddy-Tumu, Emily Winterbotham, 'Drivers of Violent Extremism: Hypotheses and Literature Review,' October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Royal United Services Institute.



prioritized.<sup>254</sup> Logic demands that to counter drivers of extremism in priority of importance requires predictability of variables, and specifically the singular one which will initiate action.

The search for nomenclature and theory to capture the problem set of terrorism appears to have come full circle to revisit the previously abandoned concept of mental health disorders being linked to terrorism... Allan, et al, note – ‘Psychological research is beginning to examine how identity formation can become “maladaptive” and whether certain cognitive “propensities” can combine to create a “mindset” that presents a higher risk.’<sup>255</sup> Schuurman, et al, are in agreeance – ‘They [Lone Wolf terrorists] are people who, more often than not, are forced to plan, prepare, and execute acts of terrorist violence on their own due to their disposition, lack of social skills, or (borderline) mental health issues.’<sup>256</sup>

The search for theory is critical, however, and must not be abandoned. As Stoker and Whiteside note ‘theory should teach us to think critically, to analyze...’ with ‘...an informed eye to the problem at hand... It provides conceptual tools and grounds us by defining our terms and providing us a firm foundation for analysis, while teaching us to distinguish between what is important and what is not.’<sup>257</sup> This paper demonstrates that the term hybrid has been applied to multiple theaters of conflict and modes of warfare. Indeed, if all things are hybrid, then nothing is hybrid.<sup>258</sup> Stoker and Whiteside also quote Clausewitz who insisted that theory ‘must have

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<sup>254</sup> Mukhtar Yahyayev and Zalina Sultanakhmedova, ‘Problems of Efficiency in Countering Extremism,’ *Central Asia and the Caucasus – English Edition* 20, no. 3 (2019): 101.

<sup>255</sup> Harriet Allan, Andrew Glazzard, Sasha Jespersen, Sneha Reddy-Tumu, Emily Winterbotham, ‘Drivers of Violent Extremism: Hypotheses and Literature Review,’ October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Royal United Services Institute.

<sup>256</sup> Bart Schuurman, Lasse Lindekilde, Stefan Malthaner, Francis O'Connor, Paul Gill & Noémie Bouhana, ‘End of the Lone Wolf: The Typology that Should Not Have Been,’ *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 42, no. 8 (2019): 773.

<sup>256</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, “Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking,” *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 28.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 26.

been derived from military history, or at least checked against it...'<sup>259</sup> While it's true that America has referenced IW history for lessons, this has only occurred selectively. For instance, the US garnered the amazing tactical leap of helicopter warfare from Algeria but then learned little else regarding the IW nature of the battle. And poignantly, vis-à-vis the subject of this paper Clausewitz remarked 'that theory will have to remain realistic. It cannot allow itself to get lost in futile speculation, hairsplitting, and flights of fancy.'<sup>260</sup> The concept of Multi-Domain Dominance is indicted by Clausewitz in this context, as there can be little argument that IW will remain the relevant form of warfare.

However, America does need to understand the ideology of her enemy, how it prompts them into action and the nature of that belief system, beyond operational tenets of holding terrain for a caliphate or going dark as a guerrilla fighter. Yaari offers up the concept of *Muqawama* which is literally translated as *resistance*.<sup>261</sup> Indeed it is a component of the actual name for Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya or Islamic Resistance Movement, which became the acronym Hamas).<sup>262</sup> According to Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah and Hamas's Khaled Mashal it is more accurately described as 'the doctrine of constant combat,' or 'persistent warfare,' with the following dynamics:

1. Peace is not an option: The Arab world must not, because of temporary hardship, be dragged into recognizing Israel and accepting its existence through peace agreements. When in need of a respite, it is permitted to reach hudna (armistice) agreements, valid for a limited period only, with the "Zionist regime."
2. It is not necessary to wait for there to be a balance of forces: Unlike president Nasser, who aimed to build up enough military might to beat Israel, or president

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<sup>259</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 15.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ehud Yaari, 'The Muqawama Doctrine,' Policy Analysis, washingtoninstitute.org, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, last updated November 13, 2006, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-muqawama-doctrine>.

<sup>262</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, 'The Iranian Gambit in Gaza,' *Commentary*, (2009): 30.

Hafiz al-Asad, who sought what he called “strategic parity,” the disciples of the Muqawama Doctrine reject any delay in the fighting unless a hudna is in force. On the contrary, even when the balance of forces is clearly in the enemy’s favor, they perform the imperative of continual warfare, if only on a small scale. The military disadvantage can be narrowed through innovative tactics. For example, both Hamas and Hezbollah made a point of kidnapping IDF soldiers from armored vehicles. Camouflage is an effective defense against aircraft, and old Katyusha rockets or home-made Qassams can provide a response to Israel’s superior fire-power.

3. Do not fight over territory: The goal of the Muqawama is the methodical erosion of the enemy’s resolve. There is no need to defend territory against Israeli occupation, or to try to conquer land. The essence is to spill blood, and since that is the case, it is better to focus on the civilian population as the primary target. The motto is blood, not land, and the effort is directed at denying victory to the enemy, not at achieving a quick result.

4. Jihad is not a national struggle: In effect, Iran and its associates in Lebanon and Palestine have requisitioned the old formula of the “Popular War of Liberation” fashioned by nationalists such as Arafat and the leaders of the Algerian revolution, and have injected it with exclusively Islamic content. Fighting is undertaken for the sake of Allah, and not out of patriotic sentiment.

5. The Arab state is not a suitable vehicle: Muqawama is not merely a military system, but a comprehensive, alternative regime. The Arab states constitute a flawed and inefficient apparatus, unfit to conduct a historic battle. The task must be shouldered instead by the Islamic movements that, alongside their military activity, engage in societal reform through educational, health and business institutions. Hamas and Hezbollah are headed by shura (consultation) councils composed of senior clerics. The “Shurocracy” is key to rehabilitating the community as well as defeating the enemy, offering an alternative hierarchical structure to dictatorships, monarchies and democracies.<sup>263</sup>

Islamist Jihadis may have other doctrine, but Muqawama best accounts for the long-term recurrences through history of Islamist IW. Over the last century Jihadis have sought out numerous avenues to war and specifically IW. The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem famously recruited Bosnian Muslims for the 13<sup>th</sup> Waffen SS Division, and provided operational guidance to a specific IW mission by ‘SS-trained commandos who parachuted into Palestine and Iraq in 1944.

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<sup>263</sup> Ehud Yaari, ‘The Muqawama Doctrine,’ Policy Analysis, washingtoninstitute.org, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, last updated November 13, 2006, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-muqawama-doctrine>.

Figure 5 *The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem salutes the 13<sup>th</sup> Waffen SS Division.*<sup>264</sup>



The agents' task was to organize an insurgency against the Jewish community in Palestine and to attack Iraqi Jews... The infiltrators also had poisons that were likely intended for the Tel Aviv water system...<sup>265</sup>

Nasser and the Pan-Arab movement provided guidance to create both the Algerian FLN, and the PLO between 1954 and 1964.<sup>266</sup> Communists have worked with Jihadis in a variety of ways. China sent aid to Palestine as early as 1960.<sup>267</sup> Jihadis with the PLO worked and trained alongside the IRA and as many as 40 other terrorist groups from the 60s to the 80s.<sup>268</sup> In the 80s

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<sup>264</sup> '13<sup>th</sup> SS Mountain Division – Handschar – 1<sup>st</sup> Croatian,' Order of Battle – Waffen SS Divisions, Historical Society of German Military History, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://historicalsocietyofgermanmilitaryhistory.com/third-reich-nazi-germany/ss-schutzstaffel/waffen-ss/order-battle-waffen-ss-divisions/>.

<sup>265</sup> Perry Biddiscombe, 'The Mufti's Men: Haj Amin al-Husayni and SS Parachute Expeditions to Palestine and Iraq, 1944-1945,' *Journal of Military History* 82, no. 3 (2018): 783-815.

<sup>266</sup> Christopher Paul, Colin P. Clarke, Beth Grill and Molly Dunigan, *Paths to Victory*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2013), 77.

<sup>267</sup> Shaina Oppenheimer, *Weapons and Ideology: Files Reveal How China Armed and Trained the Palestinians*, Haaretz.com, Haaretz Daily Newspaper Ltd., accessed April 5th 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-how-china-became-the-palestinians-biggest-ally-in-the-1960s-1.7619544?v=1592065398944>.

<sup>268</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 80.

America provided assistance to Jihadis in the fight against the USSR.<sup>269</sup> Nor was there ever a break in the fighting; Afghanistan became a factionalized free for all and Kabul lay in ruins without electricity from 1993 until the Taliban took over.<sup>270</sup> More recently, claims that Russia paid Jihadis to kill Americans in Afghanistan have surfaced.<sup>271</sup>

History bears out the theme of constant conflict as well as hybrid operations between state and non-state actors. The Israeli (and American) response essentially mirrors the concept. *Mowing the lawn*, as it is called, allows for a constant state of small-scale tension using tactics like interdicting weapons convoys or targeted killings such as the killing of Imad Mughniyeh, a Hezbollah officer, in 2008.<sup>272</sup> Intermittent large-scale offensive campaigns occur as needed based on enemy activity:

Israel's current strategy against hostile non-state actors such as Hamas reflects the assumption that Israel finds itself in a protracted intractable conflict. The use of force in such a conflict is not intended to attain impossible political goals, but rather is a long-term strategy of attrition designed primarily to debilitate the enemy capabilities. Only after showing much restraint in its military responses does Israel act forcefully to destroy the capabilities of its foes as much as possible, hoping that occasional large-scale operations also have a temporary deterrent effect in order to create periods of quiet along Israel's borders.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Dr. Lorry M. Fenner, Dr. Mark E. Stout and Ms. Jessica L. Goldings, 'Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past & Future through Captured Records.' Conference proceedings at the National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., September 13-14, 2011. <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a569571.pdf>.

<sup>270</sup> Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars – The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 4.

<sup>271</sup> Michael Barbaro, 'A Russian Plot to Kill U.S. Soldiers,' Transcript – The Daily Podcast, [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/podcasts/the-daily/russian-bounties-afghanistan.html?showTranscript=1), The New York Times Company, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/podcasts/the-daily/russian-bounties-afghanistan.html?showTranscript=1>.

<sup>272</sup> Chuck Freilich and James F. Jeffrey, 'Beyond 'Mowing the Grass': U.S. and Israeli Strategy in the Middle East,' Policy Analysis, [washingtoninstitute.org](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/beyond-mowing-the-grass-us-and-israeli-strategy-in-the-middle-east), The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, last updated April 24, 2018, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/beyond-mowing-the-grass-us-and-israeli-strategy-in-the-middle-east>.

<sup>273</sup> Efraim Inbar and Eitan Shamir, 'Mowing the Grass in Gaza,' The Jerusalem Post, Jpost Inc., last updated July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, <https://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Columnists/Mowing-the-grass-in-Gaza-368516>.

Israel first coined the phrase, but America's *tacticization* of strategy reduces grand strategy-level responses to a kinetic 'whack-a-mole' reactionary execution. It can only be considered a stop-gap according to Boot:

'One thing is clear: The primary U.S. focus since 2001, of killing and capturing terrorists, can only limit the problem; it cannot solve it. The U.S. military is engaged in what many officers call "mowing the lawn": it has to be done, but the "grass," i.e., the terrorists, will always grow back as long as they operate in terrain that is not controlled day and night by the U.S. or its allies.'<sup>274</sup>

Having identified the Muqawama strategic mindset, the true intention of Islamist Jihadis becomes more attainable. Jihadis and Mujahideen have taken a classic jihad concept and made it their own, effectively hijacking the term and rendering it actionable at both state and sub-state levels (individuals such as hostages). That there is little support among mainstream Muslims is no surprise, being that Muslims and Muslim countries bear the brunt of terror attacks.<sup>275</sup> The effective rebirth of jihad as an obligation to make war against unbelievers is likely a fait accompli owing to the mainstreaming through media and internet.<sup>276</sup>

Notably there is no question for the Mujahideen or Jihadis if they are competing above or below a level of warfare. As students of Mao and their own literature they know there is only war, guerilla, large-scale, conventional or otherwise – Mao stated clearly 'guerrilla operations must not be considered as an independent form of war. They are but one step in the total war...'

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<sup>274</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 25.

Max Boot, 'The First Victory Over ISIS,' *Commentary* (December 2017): 27.

<sup>275</sup> David Cook, 'Islamism and Jihadism: The Transformation of Classical Notions of Jihad into an Ideology of Terrorism,' *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 10, no. 2 (June 2009): 186.

'2011 Report on Terrorism,' National Counter Terrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://fas.org/irp/threat/nctc2011.pdf>.

<sup>276</sup> John Arquilla, 'Perils of the Gray Zone – Paradigms Lost, Paradoxes Regained,' *Prism* 7, no. 3 (2018): 125.

and ‘the strategy of guerrillas is inseparable from war strategy as a whole.’<sup>277</sup> This is in keeping with the contemporary trend of today’s Mujahideen rebranding Jihad in their image; they have a well-worn trail behind them as well, with Islamic history from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century effectively consisting of IW throughout and constantly. Sir John Bagot Glubb, wrote of his Arab counterparts in battle: [they] ‘swept irresistibly forward without organization, without pay, without plans, and without orders. They constitute a perpetual warning to technically advanced nations who rely for their defence (sic) on scientific progress rather than the human spirit.’<sup>278</sup>

This is seen plainly in the tactics of ISIS. General Joseph Votel commanding US Central Command (CDRUSCENTCOM) in May of 2016 told reporters that ISIS ‘may be reverting in some regards back to their terrorist roots.’ This was before Mosul had even been lost, and ISIS was still conducting conventional attacks, armed convoys and artillery barrages. They began to transition to small unit attacks, ambushes and hasty raids without attempting to gain and hold control of terrain.<sup>279</sup>

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

IW is only another way of war, and tactics cannot dictate the outcome of military campaigns in place of a long-term strategy. Combatants will select the best option for victory. If the enemy is tactically stronger, a populace-centric approach to win public opinion may be more viable. Warfare of any form can be cast aside when political demands render its continuance untenable. States have expected responses as well; kinetic (enemy-centric) responses grown from the global reaction to Munich have perpetuated as a means to demonstrate an active threat

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<sup>277</sup> John Arquilla, ‘Perils of the Gray Zone – Paradigms Lost, Paradoxes Regained,’ *Prism* 7, no. 3 (2018): 125.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Hassan Hassan, ‘Out of the Desert – ISIS’s Strategy for a Long War,’ September 2018 – Policy Paper 2018-8, Middle East Institute.

response. In doing so, Western countries attempt to maintain their Westphalian monopoly on the use of force. America was hardly alone in this issue, as several governments of the world chose kinetic-based *direct action* solutions. A COIN-based policy will have greater importance to the practice of IW and the success of military campaigns over the long-term time span of any nation. Populace-centric efforts are lagging and Boot notes that America must go beyond ‘mowing the lawn...’ Until that is achieved, it is right to say America simply doesn’t know much at all about IW.<sup>280</sup> Actively combating the ideology in play by our enemy demands conducting nation-building activities such as ‘military, diplomatic, intelligence, and other development... [otherwise] Islamist terrorism isn’t going to disappear any time soon.’<sup>281</sup> Doctrine and ideology are the drivers for action that compel nations to war; failing to address them by obscuring them with labels such as extremism only clouds the issue.

As noted in the NDAA for 2018, IW encompasses ‘activities in support of predetermined United States policy and military objectives conducted by, with, and through regular forces, irregular forces, groups, and individuals participating in competition between state and non-state actors short of traditional armed conflict.’<sup>282</sup> Much as there was no need to expand beyond *terrorism* with the term *extremism*, there is no need to expand beyond IW with undefined terms such as *hybrid*, *gray zone*, or *unrestricted*, because in the end no one agrees on any of them. IW as used in military terminology provides a working theory from which much can be determined. Defensive postures and offensive postures are both present, demonstrating a balanced approach – defense is captured with FID, stability operations, COIN, and CT operations to preserve a

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<sup>280</sup> Dr. Jake Shapiro, ‘What are Small Wars,’ May 21, 2020, in Irregular Warfare Podcast, by Princeton Empirical Studies of Conflict and West Point Modern Warfare Institute, podcast audio, 12:37, <https://mwi.usma.edu/introducing-irregular-warfare-podcast-episode-one-small-wars/>.

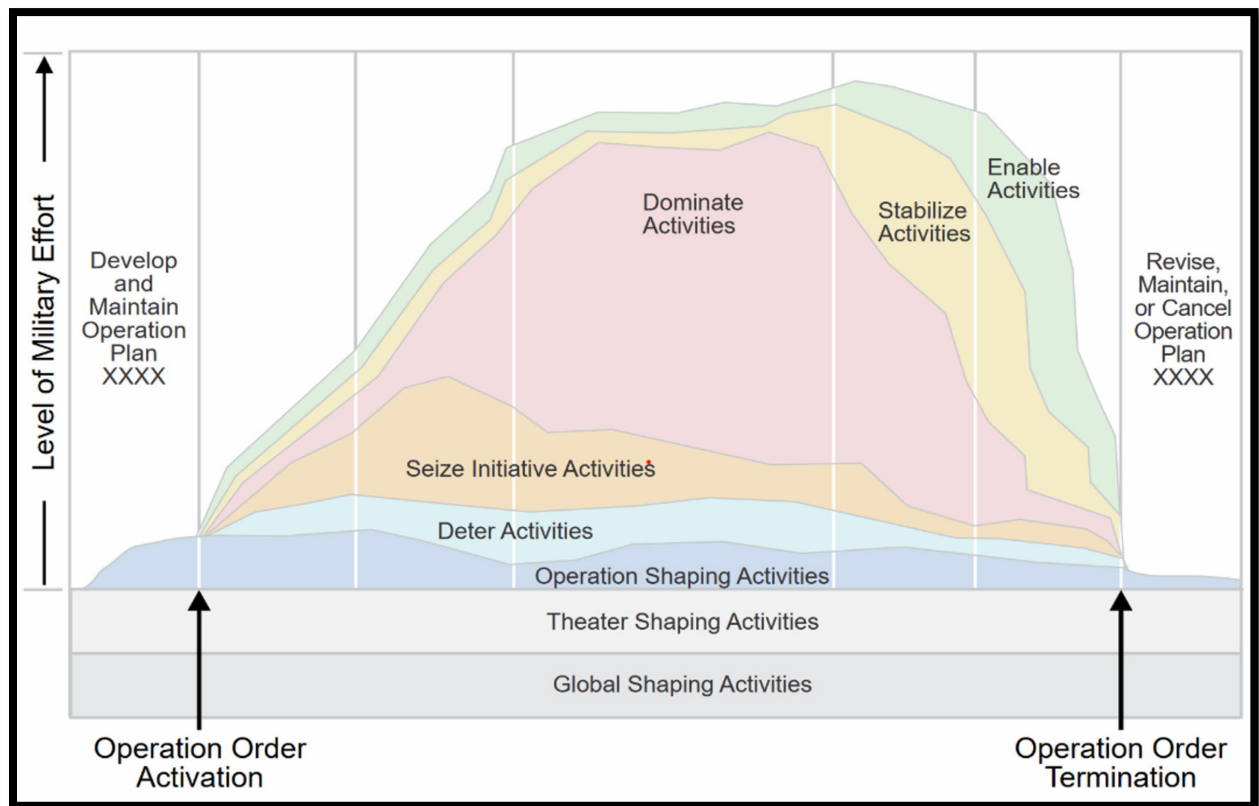
<sup>281</sup> Max Boot, ‘The First Victory Over ISIS,’ *Commentary* (December 2017): 28.

<sup>282</sup> National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, House Resolution 2810, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., (January 3, 2017), § 1202 Support of Special Operations for Irregular Warfare.



regime. Offensively UW works to overthrow a regime. From the perspective of the populace, revolt is seen in two perspectives – insurgency is revolt with popular support while terrorism offers revolt seeking popular support. Post-conflict, stability operations provide the non-violent nation-building options that provide the means to capture the all-important public opinion. What then of pre-conflict influence and opinion building?

Figure 6 *Joint force operational phases by military activity*<sup>283</sup>



This paper posits that the military definition of IW must come into line with the statutory definition. Shaping operations, though doctrinal, are loosely defined as activities occurring continuously to support requirements or a specific joint operation plan during its execution. These should be tied to IW and defined as non-violent military operations to set the conditions

<sup>283</sup> US Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-0 Joint Operations, edited by the Joint Staff, 2018, V-8.

for the dominance of American interests and added to both the IW definition in JP 1 and JP 1-02, the *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. This addition would prompt the inclusion of IW into Theater Campaign Plans (TCPs) by the Geographical Combatant Commands (GCCs) and provide a cognitive opening for military theory expansion of IW. Doctrine is the means to carry forward concepts and operational tenets beyond party and political differences. Policy makers can then provide operational relevance unblemished by party ties and unimpeded by the routine transition of American political power dictated by the Constitution.

# Chapter 3 – It's a Small World After All

Is IW a greater threat than traditional warfare within GPC? America's NDS is used by the DOD to define the current strategic environment. It describes a complex global environment described as GPC, containing both IW and traditional warfare, and comprised of five major threats (chapter two addressed one of these – VEOs). Chapter three will examine two near-peer competitors, (China and Russia), as well as two rogue states (North Korea and Iran). China, Russia, and Iran are state actors with legitimate instruments of national power and the ability to spread broad influence on the world stage. They have partner nations as well as proxies that will act on their behalf and in their interests in return for patronage. North Korea is listed as a rogue state but suffers from its pariah status, such that it is typically seen to seek China's patronage.

As described previously, IW is a means to compete that is short of traditional warfare. This chapter will investigate various facets of IW as displayed by the four state actors in the NDS, though it is clearly beyond the scope of this paper to take on a full discussion of four states (plus VEOs) and their policies – it is not all-inclusive. Section I addresses China and their use of remote techniques such as hacking, lawfare, and business proxies. Section II examines Iranian

IW executed through their proxy forces, Hamas and Lebanese Hezbollah. Russia is examined in section III, with a discussion of the efforts to reverse engineer doctrine and the resulting poor verbiage coming out of the Crimea campaign. Proxy elements and Private Military Companies (PMCs) are also examined. Section IV examines North Korea's proxy status to China. Their use of cyber, criminal, and weapons dealing suggests they are following a familiar pattern to work within a support network (China, Iran and Syria). In conclusion, this chapter notes that America should take an aggressive stance to recoup losses to China, deploy Counterintelligence as an offensive measure, and reset the playing field for all parties to acknowledge.

## **I. CHINA**

A critical point in all IW is the need of accurate and actionable intelligence. Whether the action to be taken is kinetic, non-kinetic, or merely defines the operational environment, this requirement is paramount. As noted by Warner, the primary means of COIN can be described as 'mostly measured uses of force and lots of human intelligence.'<sup>284</sup> Such intelligence can come with its own price tag – the French in Algeria demonstrated that torture for intelligence could work tactically (winning them Algiers), but also cost strategic footing on the world stage in terms of losing common ground with other nations. This lesson was amongst the many ignored and repeated by the United States in the GWOT, as scandal erupted around the waterboarding of Khalid Sheik Mohammed and later the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.<sup>285</sup>

China's intelligence collection model currently blends broad sweeps conducted via hacking, IP theft and remote social media operations, as well as expansive use of Chinese citizens with traditional recruiting operations. The intelligence community (IC) believes that the

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<sup>284</sup> Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence – An International Security History* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2014) 186.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., 289.

Chinese represent the gravest threat against US security, having surpassed the USSR as early as 1980 in terms of conducting espionage.<sup>286</sup> Their human intelligence (HUMINT) has undergone a quantum improvement in scope and effect over the last two decades and serves as an example of the critical ties between intelligence and IW. Beyond a hybrid of military options, they have used legalities to ascribe all corporate and private gains to the Communist Party, thus extending their reach as a nation as far as possible.<sup>287</sup>

#### **a. REMOTE IW: HACKING & BLENDED APPROACHES**

The hacking of the US Government's (USG) Office of Personnel Management (OPM) database has helped set the conditions for future IW operations by specifically compromising personnel files of intelligence officers. The family contacts and financial information contained therein would provide a means of external hostile control, allowing exploitation of said intelligence officers through coercion or blackmail, as noted by members of the USG such as Senator Ben Sasse.<sup>288</sup> It is unknown how China may exploit this data in the future, but within reason to see the recent acceleration of Chinese espionage as linked to the event. Concerns that China could be mapping out a USG-wide knowledge set of vulnerabilities based on access and placement of people revealed in the OPM breach were immediate.<sup>289</sup>

Joel Brenner, a former National Security Agency (NSA) senior counsel, believes clearance forms from DOD-related intelligence agencies, including NSA and the Defense

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<sup>286</sup> Peter L. Mattis, 'A Professional Assessment of Chinese Espionage,' *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 28, no. 2 (2015): 398.

<sup>287</sup> Richard McGregor, 'How the State Runs Business in China,' *foxbusiness.com*, last updated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/25/china-business-xi-jinping-communist-party-state-private-enterprise-huawei>.

<sup>288</sup> Senator Ben Sasse, 'The OPM Hack May Have Given China a Spy Recruiting Database,' *wired.com*, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/2015/07/senator-sasse-washington-still-isnt-taking-opm-breach-seriously/>.

<sup>289</sup> Kevin Liptak, Theodore Schleifer and Jim Sciutto, 'China might be building vast database of federal worker info, experts say,' *edition.cnn.com*, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/06/04/politics/federal-agency-hacked-personnel-management>.

Intelligence Agency (DIA), could be accessed through OPM. It is likely that the only intelligence agency free and clear of the issue is the CIA, who refused to allow OPM oversight of their records. “CIA refuses to put its people’s information in with OPM, and of course they’re right,” Brenner said. One lesson to draw from the breach, he said, is that “any serious clandestine agency has to be in charge of its own personnel information. Full stop.”<sup>290</sup> The impact of this hack is hard to overstate: “This is crown jewels material ... a gold mine for a foreign intelligence service. This is not the end of American human intelligence, but it’s a significant blow,” Brenner stated.<sup>291</sup> The Director of National Intelligence (at the time) James Clapper acknowledged “you have to kind of salute the Chinese for what they did.”<sup>292</sup>

Potentially as many as 32 million people’s records were compromised in the hack.<sup>293</sup> The arrest of a Chinese national by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2017 places the blame squarely at the feet of the CCP.<sup>294</sup> It has not been acknowledged to what extent the Scattered Castles database of intelligence personnel was compromised. While USG officials deny that Scattered Castles was breached, they have neither confirmed nor denied if the OPM database was linked to Scattered Castles; some reporting indicates that they were sharing information in 2014.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Joseph Marks and David Perera, ‘Newly disclosed hack got “crown jewels,”’ politico.com, accessed November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.politico.com/story/2015/06/hackers-federal-employees-security-background-checks-118954#ixzz3d4IrKNtI>.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Mike Levine, ‘China Is “Leading Suspect” in Massive Hack of US Government Networks,’ abcnews.go.com, accessed November 16, 2019, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/china-leading-suspect-massive-hack-us-government-networks/story?id=32036222>.

<sup>293</sup> U.S.- China Economic and Security Review Commission, China's Intelligence Services and Espionage Threats to the United States, 114<sup>th</sup> US Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, November 2016, chapter 2, section 3, report to House and Senate.

<sup>294</sup> Evan Perez, ‘FBI Arrests Chinese National in OPM Data Breach,’ Politics, cnn.com, Turner Broadcasting System, accessed November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/08/24/politics/fbi-arrests-chinese-national-in-opm-data-breach/index.html>.

<sup>295</sup> U.S.- China Economic and Security Review Commission, China's Intelligence Services and Espionage Threats to the United States, 114<sup>th</sup> US Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, November 2016, chapter 2, section 3, report to House and Senate.

Blended techniques are proving both expansive and successful; like all means of IW, they do not elevate an issue to the level of an armed response. During 2019 the expanded use of these blended techniques resulted in the FBI conducting approximately 1,000 investigations into Chinese espionage or theft of intellectual property.<sup>296</sup> Law enforcement officials have determined that the OPM hack appears to have been carried out by the same Chinese hackers who attacked Anthem Insurance in 2015, in which information on tens of millions of customers was stolen.<sup>297</sup> This is a critical point, revealing that the same efforts and organizations working to steal national level intelligence is working to steal commercial information as economic espionage. John Demers, the head of the National Security Division at the Justice Department notes that China uses economic espionage as Research and Development; Chinese law mandates that all corporations cooperate with the government on national security.<sup>298</sup> Demers further stated that China uses the same tactics and even some of the same intelligence officers in its espionage efforts against America's private sector. 'What it shows is how seriously the Chinese government takes their intellectual-property-theft efforts, because they're really using the crown jewels of their intelligence community and their most sophisticated and well-honed tradecraft.'<sup>299</sup> Rod Rosenstein, who was Deputy US Attorney General at the time: 'More than 90 percent of the department's cases alleging economic espionage over the past seven years involve China... More than two-thirds of the department's cases involving thefts of trade secrets are connected to China.'<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Mike Giglio, 'China's Spies Are on the Offensive,' *The Atlantic*, August 26, 2019.

<sup>297</sup> Lily Hay Newman, 'Indictment Alleges Who Hacked Anthem, but Not Why,' *wired.com*, last updated May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/anthem-hack-indictment-china/>.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> Lily Hay Newman, 'Indictment Alleges Who Hacked Anthem, but Not Why,' *wired.com*, last updated May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/anthem-hack-indictment-china/>.

China has also adapted a remote ‘screening’ approach using social media. William R. Evanina is the Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, an organization he has led since June 2, 2014. He serves as the head of Counterintelligence (CI) for the USG and as the principal CI and security advisor to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI).<sup>301</sup> Evanina lays out the simplicity of the remote screening model: “What you have is an intelligence officer sitting in Beijing...and he can send out 30,000 emails a day. And if he gets 300 replies, that’s a high-yield, low-risk intelligence operation.”<sup>302</sup> Elaborating on the nature of this vulnerability, Evanina noted that China will wait years to target people (such as those in the OPM hack): “Your Spidey sense goes down.” But “your memory is not erased”— which is to say that remembered information is still of value to the Chinese.<sup>303</sup>

Chinese travelers provide another remote approach that safeguards their intelligence officers. Business representatives, academics, scientists, students, and tourists supplement their intelligence collection.<sup>304</sup> The use of students is so pervasive that Chinese defector Chen Yonglin claims of US campuses “the Chinese student organization in every school is under control,” and “operation funds mostly come from the education department of the consulate, and meetings are held on consulate grounds.”<sup>305</sup>

Much of what is occurring could only be possible through the Chinese propaganda campaign that has lasted decades. The American media, sympathetic to the left by their own admission, now report China is no longer Communist: ‘Beijing needs to regularly encourage nationalism, having long *abandoned communism* as an ideology in the face of economic growth

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<sup>301</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, ‘Director, National Counterintelligence and Security Center,’ accessed November 16, 2019, <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/ncsc-who-we-are/ncsc-leadership>.

<sup>302</sup> Mike Giglio, ‘China’s Spies Are on the Offensive,’ *The Atlantic*, August 26, 2019.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> John Poreba, ‘Neutralizing China’s Student-Spy Network,’ *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 25, no. 2 (2012): 275.



and a widening wealth gap.’<sup>306</sup> Likewise, apologists in the media fail to grasp the aggression inherent in China’s actions:

More likely, it's because China doesn't really see itself as a rival to the United States. Most of China's foreign policy establishment was educated in the United States and many of them have internalized American viewpoints as their own. They are ambitious to increase China's power and influence in the world, certainly, but for many of them the whole idea that China could take on the United States is ludicrous.<sup>307</sup>

In the face of such falsehoods (the CIA World Factbook reports China’s form of government as ‘communist party-led state’) the American populace are understandably gullible in dealing with the Chinese.<sup>308</sup> Such long-term IW campaigns understandably benefit from governments that have life-long party rulers common to authoritarian states, while America’s peaceful transition of power every four years puts her at a disadvantage due to short-sighted party politics. Indeed, such political gamesmanship has resulted in America and her allies sealing (as opposed to prosecuting) indictments against Chinese hackers ‘detailing and condemning various network intrusions and data breaches that date back to 2006.’<sup>309</sup>

## **b. IW VIA LAWFARE AND BUSINESS PROXY**

The Anthem hack reveals how Chinese IW can overlap into the business world, but hacking is only one aspect. Other illustrative examples of IW in China are found through their use of lawfare. Lawfare is used by China to ‘manipulate international and domestic law to assert

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<sup>306</sup> David Pierson, Alice Su and Shashank Bengali, ‘China reins in nationalists clamoring for an invasion of Taiwan,’ LATimes.com, last updated June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-06-08/china-taiwan-nationalism-pla>.

<sup>307</sup> Salvatore Babones, ‘Does China Really Pose A Threat To U.S. National Security?,’ Forbes.com, last updated December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/salvatorebabones/2017/12/19/does-china-really-pose-a-threat-to-us-national-security/#85d48eb75e45>.

<sup>308</sup> CIA, ‘China,’ World Factbook, CIA.gov, accessed July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>.

<sup>309</sup> Lily Hay Newman, ‘Indictment Alleges Who Hacked Anthem, but Not Why,’ wired.com, last updated May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.wired.com/story/anthem-hack-indictment-china/>.

Chinese interests,’ and do so below the level of armed conflict as a critical component of IW.<sup>310</sup> It is not specific to China, however in 2003 they developed the concept of the ‘Three Warfares’ which include Lawfare, Psychological Warfare, and Media Warfare. The intent of this concept was to enable China to gain favor in key areas of competition. The Small Wars Journal notes its use to manipulate international and domestic law to assert Chinese interests.<sup>311</sup> Lawfare justifies China’s actions as legal to create doubt regarding proper retaliation against China, and is used specifically as IW to impede American planners who cannot justify armed conflict as a response.<sup>312</sup>

An example is the release of new legislation in June by China affecting Hong Kong:

The national security law’s criminal provisions resemble those governing the Chinese mainland, and they allow life imprisonment for “principal offenders” in the aforementioned categories of activity—which are defined broadly. The law also establishes a mainland-run agency in Hong Kong—the Office for Safeguarding National Security—which has the authority to take control of security investigations from local law enforcement. Central Chinese authorities will wield significant influence over the law’s interpretation and application. Mainland China will retain jurisdiction over “complex” cases brought under the law, including those that involve foreign collusion. And Hong Kong’s courts have no authority to interpret the national security law. The power of interpretation instead lies with the NPC, as preliminary reports on the law’s provisions suggested would be the case.<sup>313</sup>

Hong Kong citizens feel their rights are being trampled under the new Chinese law and fear it is a move away from the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ doctrine. The UK views the Chinese law as a violation of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration (which stipulated the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ doctrine) and is offering passports to residents of Hong Kong. China in

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<sup>310</sup> Jeremy D. Lawhorn, ‘Pursuing a Strategy for Yesterday’s War,’ [smallwarsjournal.com](https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/pursuing-strategy-yesterdays-war#_edn28), last updated March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, [https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/pursuing-strategy-yesterdays-war#\\_edn28](https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/pursuing-strategy-yesterdays-war#_edn28).

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> Richard Altieri & Benjamin Della Rocca, ‘China Enacts Hong Kong Security Law; India Bans Dozens of Chinese Apps,’ [lawfareblog.com](https://www.lawfareblog.com/china-enacts-hong-kong-security-law-india-bans-dozens-chinese-apps), last updated July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/china-enacts-hong-kong-security-law-india-bans-dozens-chinese-apps>.

turn threatens retaliation for the perceived slight and the increase in threatening rhetoric is spilling into other domains such as the business world. The row over Hong Kong increases the potential for the UK to cancel dealings with Huawei, with the UK Prime Minister referring to them as a ‘Hostile State Vendor.’<sup>314</sup>

Huawei is a Chinese telecom company seeking to capitalize on the emergent global upgrade from the 4G cellular network to a new 5G offering. 5G touts ultra-low latency and much higher capacity (less signal delay for faster and bigger downloads) than the current 4G cellular network, but is currently described as a ‘disappointing, incremental upgrade on 4G.’<sup>315</sup> The company’s Chief Financial Officer, Meng Wanzhou (also vice-chair of the Board and daughter of the company’s founder) was arrested at the Vancouver airport while in transit to China in 2018. She is being held by Canada for extradition to the US, essentially dragging Canada into what has become another 4+1 international scenario (China, US, UK, Canada + Hong Kong). She has been indicted by the US for planning to ‘obtain prohibited U.S. goods and technology for Huawei’s Iran-based business via Skycom, and move money out of Iran by deceiving a major bank. The indictment alleges that Skycom was an “unofficial subsidiary” of Huawei, not a local partner.’<sup>316</sup> More recently, America’s Federal Communications Commission has determined that both Huawei and ZTE are ‘national security threats.’<sup>317</sup> Huawei is known to have distanced

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<sup>314</sup> Scott Bicheno, ‘Hong Kong dispute could be the final nail in the coffin for Huawei in the UK,’ *telecoms.com*, last updated July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, <https://telecoms.com/505334/hong-kong-dispute-could-be-the-final-nail-in-the-coffin-for-huawei-in-the-uk/>.

Scott Bicheno, ‘UK PM refers to Huawei as a “hostile state vendor”,’ *telecoms.com*, last updated June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://telecoms.com/505283/uk-pm-refers-to-huawei-as-a-hostile-state-vendor/>.

<sup>315</sup> Jamie Davies, ‘Vodafone claims 5G Standalone first in the UK,’ *telecoms.com*, last updated July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, <https://telecoms.com/505355/vodafone-claims-5g-standalone-first-in-the-uk/>.

<sup>316</sup> Fox Business, ‘Huawei covered up Iran business operation,’ *foxbusiness.com*, last updated June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, <https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/huawei-covered-iran-business>.

<sup>317</sup> Jamie Davies, ‘FCC officially designates ZTE and Huawei as national security threats,’ *telecoms.com*, last updated July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, <https://telecoms.com/505295/fcc-officially-designates-zte-and-huawei-as-national-security-threats/>.

themselves from Skycom as early as 2013 due to American sanctions by changing managers, shutting down a Tehran office and forming another business to take over Skycom contracts.<sup>318</sup>

The law in China regarding Huawei (and every company) is clear. ‘Any organization and citizen’ shall ‘support and cooperate in national intelligence work.’<sup>319</sup> As such, it is not only likely but inevitable that Huawei’s bid to capture the newest IT market would play out as a threat model. One need only reference Tiktok, whose recently released beta version for Apple’s iOS 14 was accessing users’ clipboards, to imagine the exploitation possible with Huawei operating in the 5G marketspace.<sup>320</sup> In 2013 the cost of China’s criminal actions vis-à-vis stolen American trade secrets was estimated to be \$300B.<sup>321</sup> A completely predictable outcome of China’s expansion in intelligence collection is the commoditization and marketing of both their commercial and defense secrets to the highest bidder (certainly if they managed the 5G market space). This would fit nicely with Communist China’s current position straddling the line between historic revolution-backer and 21<sup>st</sup> century free-market maverick. Providing secrets to nefarious actors to target America or allies can accomplish many ends for China, such as developing revenue and capacity building of proxy nations. More concerning should be the potential for VEO patronage that disrupts and distracts American efforts with little or no

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<sup>318</sup> Fox Business, ‘Huawei covered up Iran business operation,’ [foxbusiness.com](https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/huawei-covered-iran-business), last updated June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, <https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/huawei-covered-iran-business>.

<sup>319</sup> Richard McGregor, ‘How the State Runs Business in China,’ [foxbusiness.com](https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/huawei-covered-iran-business), last updated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/25/china-business-xi-jinping-communist-party-state-private-enterprise-huawei>.

Associated Press, ‘China cuts Uighur births with IUDs, abortion, sterilization,’ [apnews.com](https://apnews.com/269b3de1af34e17c1941a514f78d764c), last updated June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://apnews.com/269b3de1af34e17c1941a514f78d764c>.

<sup>320</sup> Zak Doffman, ‘Anonymous Hackers Target TikTok: ‘Delete This Chinese Spyware Now’,’ [forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoffman/2020/07/01/anonymous-targets-tiktok-delete-this-chinese-spyware-now/#5c97256f35cc), last updated July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoffman/2020/07/01/anonymous-targets-tiktok-delete-this-chinese-spyware-now/#5c97256f35cc>.

<sup>321</sup> Peter L. Mattis, ‘A Professional Assessment of Chinese Espionage,’ *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 28, no. 2 (2015): introduction.

footprint and will inevitably cost American lives. This is the true cost of America's poor Operational Security (OPSEC).

## II. IRAN

The Islamic Republic of Iran went through its revolution in 1979, ousting the Shah of Iran and emplacing the Ayatollah Khomeini. One of the key factors of Iran's successes over the last 40 years has been their propensity for IW. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, this is primarily the responsibility of the Islamic Republic Guards Corps (IRGC) and specifically the Quds Force of the IRGC. Court documents, specifically *Campuzano v. Islamic Republic of Iran*, revealed that the Iranian Ministry of Information and Security (working through the IRGC) spent between \$50-100M in 1997 sponsoring various proxy non-state terror actors.<sup>322</sup>

The IRGC exports training, arms, and occasionally troops to non-state actor proxy forces such as Hamas and Hezbollah.<sup>323</sup> In the case of Lebanese Hezbollah (not to be confused with other elements operating under the name Hezbollah or *party of god*), they are virtually an arm of the Iranian military, deployed into Iraq and Syria to carry out Iranian mandates and solidified in yet another 4+1 doctrine (identifying Russia, Iran, Iraq, Syria and the Lebanese Hezbollah as the '+1' non-state actor in the relationship).<sup>324</sup> These two forces demonstrate Iran's true mastery of IW with Hezbollah specifically acting as a 'global, multifaceted organization, engaged in a wide range of endeavors, including overt social and political activities in Lebanon, military activities

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<sup>322</sup> Sam Dougherty, 'What then must we do? Why Rubin v. Islamic Republic of Iran leaves victims of state sponsored terror attacks with few good options,' *Boston College Law Review*, (2019): 1461.

<sup>323</sup> Eran Zohar, 'The arming of non-state actors in the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula,' *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 69, no. 4 (2015): 440.

<sup>324</sup> Shahram Akbarzadeh, 'Iran's Uncertain Standing in the Middle East,' *The Washington Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 117.

in Lebanon, Syria, and throughout the Middle East, and covert militant, criminal, and terrorist activities elsewhere around the world.’<sup>325</sup>

#### **a. HEZBOLLAH**

Lebanese Hezbollah owe their very existence to Iran. In June of 1982, Israel invaded southern Lebanon to fight the PLO, followed rapidly by an international peace-keeping force (including the United States) which entered the country in the fall of 1982.<sup>326</sup> Syrian forces as well had occupied Lebanon for decades, and in this chaos, a group of militants and religious leaders broke away from the Shia group Amal in 1982. Iran sent 1500 troops from the IRGC to the Bekka Valley in Lebanon, where “Hezbollah recruits were first indoctrinated to Khomeini’s vision of political Shiism and trained to resist what he perceived as the hegemonic order that the United States, with Israeli assistance, was attempting to establish in the region.”<sup>327</sup> In such an environment, targets of opportunity would not be hard to find.

The targets selected were both spectacular and high payoff: in 1983 the American Embassy and the United States Marine Corps Barracks in Beirut were both struck by suicide truck bombs that killed 63 people in the embassy and 241 in the barracks. French barracks were bombed simultaneously with the United States barracks killing 58 French paratroopers.<sup>328</sup> There remains considerable controversy regarding the role of Lebanese Hezbollah and Iran, who deny any part in the attacks, though it is unclear why, since Lebanese Hezbollah reference it in their own infamous *Open Letter*: ‘The first punishment against these forces was carried out on 18

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<sup>325</sup> Dr. Matthew Levitt, ‘Lebanese Hezbollah Interactive Map,’ [washingtoninstitute.org](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/hezbollahinteractivemap/), last updated August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/hezbollahinteractivemap/>.

<sup>326</sup> Richard Ernsberger Jr., ‘The BLT Building is Gone,’ *Military History*, November 2016.

<sup>327</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, ‘Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,’ *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 55.

<sup>328</sup> David Schenker and Matthew Levitt, ‘Who was Imad Mughniyeh,’ [WashingtonInstitute.org](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/who-was-imad-mughniyeh), last updated February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/who-was-imad-mughniyeh>.

April and the second on 29 October 1983.’<sup>329</sup> There is admittedly some confusion on the second date (the USMC Beirut barracks were bombed on 23 October 1983), but the first date is the accurate date the US Embassy in Beirut was bombed. Hala Jaber, in her 1997 book about Hezbollah, claims:

Iran’s ambassador to Syria, Ali Akbar Mohtashemi—a founder of Hezbollah—helped organize the Beirut bombings in consultation with Syrian intelligence. She asserts the Marine barracks bomb was prepared in eastern Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley, then under Syrian control. Hezbollah and the Syrian and Iranian governments have denied any role in the bombings, though in 2004 Iran reportedly erected a monument in Tehran to the attacks and its “martyrs.”<sup>330</sup>

The bombings were primarily attributed to Imad Mughniyeh, a Lebanese Hezbollah operative who rose to be their International Operations Commander and was further blamed for the kidnapping, torture, and murder of CIA Chief of Station William Buckley. Mughniyeh operated in Argentina as well, and in 1992 bombed their Israeli Embassy, killing 29 people. In 1994 he bombed the Asociacion Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), also in Buenos Aires, and killed 85 people. Mughniyeh was assassinated in 2008 by a joint Mossad-CIA operation.<sup>331</sup>

Like many terrorist organizations, Lebanese Hezbollah chose to branch into politics, and in 1989 began legitimate efforts to do so. Having gained the blessing of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini, the Lebanese Hezbollah has been involved in every Lebanese election since then.<sup>332</sup> Lebanese Hezbollah took up the “Lebanonization” of their party narrative

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<sup>329</sup> ‘Nass al-Risala al-Maftuha allati wajahaha Hizballah ila-l-Mustad’afin fi Lubnan wa-l-Alam,’ published February 16, 1985 in al-Safir (Beirut), publisher unknown, [https://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/The Hizballah Program - An Open Letter.pdf](https://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/The%20Hizballah%20Program%20-%20An%20Open%20Letter.pdf). As noted on the ICT.org website ‘It carries the unmistakable imprint of Sheikh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, the Hizballah (sic) mentor, and is inspired by his book *Ma’maal-Quwma fi-l-Islam* (Beirut 1979). See also his article in al-Muntalak (Beirut), October 1986.’

<sup>330</sup> Richard Ernsberger Jr., ‘The BLT Building is Gone,’ *Military History*, November 2016.

<sup>331</sup> David Schenker and Matthew Levitt, ‘Who was Imad Mughniyeh,’ WashingtonInstitute.org, last updated February 14th, 2008, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/who-was-imad-mughniyeh>.

<sup>332</sup> Rola El Hussein, ‘Hezbollah and the Axis of Refusal: Hamas, Iran and Syria,’ *Third World Quarterly*, (2010): 807.

to ensure that they did not alienate their own populace, as many were understandably weary of violence.<sup>333</sup> Maintaining this support is done by the tried and true methods of public services; keeping the poor and oppressed in mind they provide social welfare to the Shia population of Lebanon. All the while Lebanese Hezbollah has fought a war of attrition against Israel and balanced their responsibilities to such a degree that they rose to be the most powerful party in Lebanon, pushed Israel out in 2000, and achieved a tactical ‘draw’ in 2006.<sup>334</sup> Their patrons meanwhile continue to increase support, and in 2012 Iran was estimated to provide \$700M in aid to Lebanese Hezbollah.<sup>335</sup>

Iran uses Lebanese Hezbollah to continue exporting its model of Shiism, as well as silence dissent. In 2014, Iran worked with the Lebanese Hezbollah, Iraqi Badr Corps (historically aligned with Iran), and Kata’ib Hezbollah to create ‘Hezbollah in Syria.’ These elements follow the example of Lebanese Hezbollah, and as Shias are ideologically mandated to follow the *Wali-al-Faqih* (Supreme Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, serving as senior Shia jurist and theologian) as noted by the Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah in 1987.<sup>336</sup> More recently in Iraq, the Popular Mobilization Units are largely Shia and pro-Iranian, which is certainly cause for concern as they are 120,000-strong.<sup>337</sup> The Lebanese Hezbollah model of Iranian proxy warfare has also been used abroad as a long arm of Shia retribution: Between 1979 and 1994, the CIA reported that Iran “murdered Iranian defectors and dissidents in West Germany, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Turkey.” Overall, more than 60 individuals were targeted in assassination

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<sup>333</sup> Rola El Hussein, ‘Hezbollah and the Axis of Refusal: Hamas, Iran and Syria,’ *Third World Quarterly*, (2010): 807.

<sup>334</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, ‘Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,’ *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 55.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid., 54-55.

<sup>337</sup> Brandon Friedman, ‘Iran’s Hezbollah Model in Iraq and Syria: Fait Accompli?’, *Orbis*, (2018): 445-447.



attempts. In many cases, Hezbollah members functioned as the logistics experts or gunmen in these plots.<sup>338</sup>

From a proxy force prosecuting targets for Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah has fully graduated to a deployable expeditionary model that further indoctrinates along party lines. Branching even further Lebanese Hezbollah operations include “drugs and arms trafficking, human smuggling, trade in contraband, money-laundering and financial fraud that have been observed not only in the Middle East but also in Asia, Africa, North America, and South America.”<sup>339</sup> Lebanese Hezbollah activities in Latin America netted as much as \$50M between 1995 and 2002.<sup>340</sup> Such findings suggest a fully operational and self-organizing entity that is on its own mission against its own targets, while still beholding to the Islamic Republic of Iran and accomplishing their mission sets.

#### **b. HAMAS**

Iran saw an opportunity to turn Palestinian sentiment towards Iran in the rise of the Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas).<sup>341</sup> The Palestinians sided with Iraq in the Iraq-Iran war from 1980 to 1988, and Iran sought to change this situation.<sup>342</sup> Hamas was created from the membership base of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. By the time of the 1987 intifada, the PLO’s Arafat was living in exile in Tunisia and had great difficulty controlling events in the Gaza Strip. Hamas began challenging Arafat for leadership and by February 1988, began leaflet drops to challenge the PLO’s authority (specifically the Fatah faction).<sup>343</sup> The early performance of Hamas was largely lackluster; over a

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<sup>338</sup> Matthew Levitt, ‘Iran’s Deadly Diplomats,’ *CTC Sentinel* 11, no. 7 (August 2018): 11.

<sup>339</sup> William Costanza, ‘Hizballah and Its Mission in Latin America,’ *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, (2012): 194.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, ‘The Iranian Gambit in Gaza,’ *Commentary*, (2009): 30.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

thousand of their people (including top leaders) were arrested and hundreds forced into exile in Lebanon by Israel.<sup>344</sup> Hezbollah shepherded these leaders to Tehran seeking aid in 1990; it was at this point that Iran began the arming, funding, and training of Hamas.<sup>345</sup> By 1992, Arafat (leading the opposing Fatah faction of the PLO) was on record as complaining about Iran sponsoring Hamas to the tune of \$30 million a year.<sup>346</sup> This was also a propaganda victory for Iran, whose stated constitutional goal is to prosper all Muslims everywhere, not just Shias.<sup>347</sup>

Notably, it was Hezbollah that trained Hamas, and the success of Hamas's first suicide bombings in 1994 is tied to Hezbollah (as opposed to the IRGC-Quds Force, unless considered indirectly as a second or third order effect).<sup>348</sup> The suicide bombings in 1994 (along with other efforts by Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas) were aimed at embarrassing Arafat who was attending the Oslo Accords as the nominal representative of the Palestinians.<sup>349</sup> Hamas intended to wrest that title from him and the decade of the 1990s saw strange bedfellows as Fatah and Israel worked together to fight Hamas and bring stability to the region.<sup>350</sup>

Hamas as a Sunni organization is not tied to a singular religious leader (read: Iran).<sup>351</sup> This is important as Islam serves as both a religion and political orientation, and as such they use Sunniism to justify any number of positions that go beyond the scope of Shiism. Key among these is seeking support from other states than Iran, such as Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Daniel Byman, 'Is Hamas Winning?,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2013): 63.

Rafael D. Frankel, 'Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 59.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, 'The Iranian Gambit in Gaza,' *Commentary*, (2009): 30.

<sup>347</sup> Shahram Akbarzadeh, 'Iran's Uncertain Standing in the Middle East,' *The Washington Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 109.

<sup>348</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, 'Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 59.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Jonathan I.Z. Agronsky, 'The Secret War Against Hamas,' *World & I*, (1996): 78.

<sup>351</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, 'Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 58.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., 59.

Lebanese Hezbollah's experience in their 2006 war with Israel served to educate the Hamas organization, who used their Lebanese counterpart's stalemate with the Israeli Defense Forces to inform their own efforts. In 2007 Hamas and Fatah fought for the control of the Gaza Strip in a civil war.<sup>353</sup> The Hamas political arm had built a broad public support base owing in large part to the social services provided such as schools and hospitals.<sup>354</sup> Hamas won the Gaza Strip and left Fatah in charge of the Palestinian Authority, which was then essentially the West Bank territory.<sup>355</sup>

Hamas angered their patrons by siding with the popular uprisings that occurred in the Arab Spring, and specifically by turning against Syria in 2012. Syria had been more than a stalwart supporter... Hamas had actually housed their external headquarters in Damascus since 1999.<sup>356</sup> This effectively placed them against Tehran and the 4+1 coalition (Russia, Iran, Iraq, Syria and the Lebanese Hezbollah).<sup>357</sup> They have since reportedly reached out via Iran to seek talks with Syria (as it appears Syrian leader Assad will stay in power) and offered to provide Iran with locations of Israeli missiles. This offer reportedly involves Iranian aid to Hamas increasing from \$6M monthly to \$30M monthly, and may represent a new collective defense agreement between Iran, Lebanese Hezbollah and Hamas.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Daniel Byman, 'Is Hamas Winning?,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2013): 64.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> Rafael D. Frankel, 'Keeping Hamas and Hezbollah out of a War with Iran,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2012): 59.

<sup>357</sup> Daniel Byman, 'Is Hamas Winning?,' *The Washington Quarterly*, (2013): 65.

<sup>358</sup> Michael Bachner and TOI staff, 'Iran said increasing Hamas funding to \$30m per month, wants intel on Israel,' *timesofisrael.com*, last updated August 5th, 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-agrees-to-increase-hamas-funding-to-30-million-per-month-report/>.

### III. RUSSIA

A key aspect of all IW operations is the need for accurate intelligence; as demonstrated by the Chinese efforts, these can take on their own operational lifespan, particularly when executed at scale. In the case of Russian advances into the Crimean Peninsula, intelligence was literally so accurate that the resulting Information Warfare operations allowed for a takeover almost devoid of conflict.<sup>359</sup> While this was a masterful achievement, the issues with using this campaign to denote new or ground-breaking terminology are two-fold: first is the effort to reverse engineer a term based on activities in a single campaign; second is the inherent failings of the terms *hybrid* and *Gerasimov doctrine*, and the resulting confusion.<sup>360</sup>

#### a. REVERSE ENGINEERING

In discussing the apparent effort to reverse engineer a strategic design from Crimea, two prime examples are available. In *Little Green Men*, the authors lay out the following principles of Russian doctrine in the Crimea:

1. Strategy to deal with states and regions on the periphery of the Russian Federation
2. Primacy of nonmilitary factors: politics, diplomacy, economics, finance information, and intelligence
3. Primacy of the information domain: use of cyberwarfare, propaganda, and deception, especially toward the Russian-speaking populace
4. Persistent (rather than plausible) denial of Russian operations
5. Use of unidentified local and Russian agents
6. Use of intimidation, bribery, assassination, and agitation
7. Start of military activity without war declaration; actions appear to be spontaneous actions of local troops/militias
8. Use of armed civilian proxies, self-defense militias, and imported paramilitary units e.g., Cossacks, Vostok Battalion) instead of, or in advance of, regular troops

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<sup>359</sup> Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, 'Russia and Hybrid Warfare – Going Beyond the Label,' January 2016, *Project Report - Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Definitions, Capabilities, Scope and Possible Responses*, Kikimora Publications at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

## 9. Asymmetric, nonlinear actions<sup>361</sup>

Clearly these facets reach far beyond UW or military operations to include all legitimate aspects of national instruments of power and even further to illegitimate ones such as criminal and civilians not associated with the government. That alone predicates a need for monumental intelligence to coordinate such diverse aspects of an operation. Renz and Smith note that Russia's intelligence collection allowed for a victory on the Crimean Peninsula which is unlikely to be repeated elsewhere – the physical capture and control of internet and telecom infrastructure which stood geographically as a single point of failure. This allowed for dominance of the information domain which set the stage for further operations.<sup>362</sup>

### **b. TYPOLOGY FAILURE**

Renz and Smith note that the 'hybrid warfare' concept is not suitable as an analytical tool for assessing Russian military capabilities or foreign policy intentions and should therefore not be used as the basis for strategic decision-making and defence (sic) planning.' They further state that 'the 'hybrid warfare' umbrella is likely to obscure more than it can explain in terms of analysis and risks arriving at skewed conclusions that could even be playing into Russia's hands.'<sup>363</sup> The term hybrid was noted by Wigell to encompass 'the renewed Russian threat to European security, Chinese tactics to win battles without open conflict in the South China Sea, and the challenge to western civilization posed by non-state actors such as the Islamic State in

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<sup>361</sup> US Army Special Operations Command, *Little Green Men*, edited by the USASOC Deputy Chief of Staff G3, Sensitive Activities Division G3X, 2014, 1.

<sup>362</sup> Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, 'Russia and Hybrid Warfare – Going Beyond the Label,' January 2016, *Project Report - Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Definitions, Capabilities, Scope and Possible Responses*, Kikimora Publications at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland.

<sup>363</sup> Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, 'Russia and Hybrid Warfare – Going Beyond the Label,' January 2016, *Project Report - Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Definitions, Capabilities, Scope and Possible Responses*, Kikimora Publications at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland.

Iraq and Syria (ISIS).<sup>364</sup> One may surmise the unlikelihood that all these functions fit so neatly under a single label. Stoker and Whiteside note: ‘by confusing competition among adversaries with things called hybrid or gray-zone war, we risk conflating everything with war—a dangerous proposition.’<sup>365</sup>

Another unfortunate finding is the use of the term *Gerasimov Doctrine* in reference to modern Russian IW efforts. Fridman notes that the originator of the term, Mark Galeotti, has publicly apologized for coining the phrase; it turns out Gerasimov’s famous quotations were someone else’s work. Adamsky further notes that the use of such terminology has led to mischaracterization of Russian operations.<sup>366</sup>

Such doctrinally problematic issues are further illustrated in *Little Green Men*. Though published by USASOC’s *Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies* (ARIS) Studies Group, it allows for stipulations that vary from published DOD doctrine. Specifically, the authors have noted:

The title’s reference to unconventional warfare is intended to include the full spectrum of Russian activities in the subject time frame (2013–2014), including diplomatic coercion, intimidation, bribery, manipulation of media, terror, subterfuge, sabotage, and a host of other kinetic and nonkinetic activities. There are many terms and concepts that contribute to the study of modern conflict, including irregular warfare, hybrid warfare, new-generation warfare, and others. Each term has competing definitions and nuances, and each adds value to the ongoing discussion and analysis. Russian activities in Ukraine featured elements of many of these ideas. But for the purpose of clarity and uniformity within this study, the authors use the term unconventional warfare to embrace the

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<sup>364</sup> John Arquilla, ‘Hybrid Interference as a Wedge Strategy: A Theory of External Interference in Liberal Democracy,’ *International Affairs* 95, no. 2 (2019): 255.

<sup>365</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, “Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking,” *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 25.

<sup>366</sup> Ofer Fridman, ‘On the Gerasimov Doctrine – Why the West Fails to Beat Russia to the Punch,’ *Prism* 8, no. 2 (2019): 101.

wide variety of military, informational, political, diplomatic, economic, financial, cultural, and religious activities observed and analyzed.<sup>367</sup>

As previously pointed out in this paper, such a definition goes beyond the scope of UW, which is doctrinally defined as resistance-based warfare utilizing a guerrilla force to overthrow a sovereign government. IW as an umbrella term is the closest doctrinal term to the context above; it captures all manner of competition executed below the threshold of traditional warfare. It is also a statutory term per §1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act.<sup>368</sup>

The Russian mindset of future warfare is summarized by Berzins as:

...the Russian view of modern warfare is based on the idea that the main battlespace is the mind and, as a result, new-generation wars are to be dominated by information and psychological warfare, in order to achieve superiority in troops and weapons control, morally and psychologically depressing the enemy's armed forces personnel and civil population. The main objective is to reduce the necessity for deploying hard military power to the minimum necessary, making the opponent's military and civil population support the attacker to the detriment of their own government and country. It is interesting to note the notion of permanent war, since it denotes a permanent enemy. In the current geopolitical structure, the clear enemy is Western civilization, its values, culture, political system, and ideology.<sup>369</sup>

What becomes clear through Berzins' work with the National Defense Academy of Latvia and that of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory is that similar constructs and assumptions are being assigned to Russian motivations across academia (in very different settings). This validates the concerns of Renz and Smith that analyses can easily be

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<sup>367</sup> US Army Special Operations Command, *Little Green Men*, edited by the USASOC Deputy Chief of Staff G3, Sensitive Activities Division G3X, 2014, 6.

<sup>368</sup> National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, House Resolution 2810, 115<sup>th</sup> Cong., (January 3, 2017), § 1202 Support of Special Operations for Irregular Warfare.

<sup>369</sup> Janis Berzins, 'Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy,' April 2014, policy paper no. 2, National Defence Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strategic Research.

obscured, conclusions skewed and Russian strategy is in danger of being solely discerned based upon their Crimean efforts. Russian operations in the Crimea took full advantage of lines of operation within a closed environment that met their requirements. Russia used intelligence to identify the most favorable conditions for IW, instigated revolt among the sympathetic populace and let the pro-Russian militias be seen doing the fighting. Since they didn't engage in open conflict, they maintained arguable deniability of conducting open warfare against neighbor states, ostensibly to stay within the Westphalian model.<sup>370</sup> It cannot be coincidental that both Georgia and then the Ukraine were cited as moving to join NATO, and then were both invaded by Russia.<sup>371</sup> Perhaps a better gauge for Russian activity would be for policymakers to examine where Russia has conceived of herself to be slighted.

### **c. PROXIES AND PMCs**

Russia further embraces IW by enabling their proxy states' activities in conduct best termed as war crimes. In the case of Syria, there have been 34 uses of chemical weapons confirmed by the UN's Human Rights Council since the war began in 2011, and more than 80 have been reported in total.<sup>372</sup> Even after Russia took part in brokering an agreement for the Syrians to turn over their weapons, positive proof came back that the chemical strikes matched weapons in Syrian stockpiles (that were supposedly destroyed). Russia then used its seat on the UN Security Council to vote against renewing the mandate of the investigative commission, which disbanded, leaving no investigative authority to research chemical attacks in Syria.

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<sup>370</sup> US Army Special Operations Command, *Little Green Men*, edited by the USASOC Deputy Chief of Staff G3, Sensitive Activities Division G3X, 2014, 43.

<sup>371</sup> Paul Gallis, *The NATO Summit at Bucharest, 2008*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2008), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS22847>.

<sup>372</sup> Bryan Gardiner, 'These Elite Chemical Weapons Detectives Can Prove Who's Behind Deadly Attacks,' [getpocket.com](https://getpocket.com), accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, [https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-chemical-weapons-detectives?utm\\_source=pocket-newtab](https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-chemical-weapons-detectives?utm_source=pocket-newtab).



Meanwhile, Russian industry looks to extraction projects including Velada and Mercury, both owned by long-time Putin confidant Yevgeny Prigozhin, alleged to own the Wagner Group.<sup>373</sup>

Figure 7 *East Ghouta, Syria*<sup>374</sup>



Russian IW efforts must include discussion of Private Military Contractors (PMC) such as the Wagner Group. The use of paramilitary, mercenary, or private forces, depending on one's definition, has a strong Russian history tied to the people known as Cossacks. Originally neither racial, national, ethnic or religious, this militaristic subculture has existed since at least the 15<sup>th</sup> and perhaps even the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Modern Cossacks have experienced a rebirth since the demise of the USSR, and Putin has recognized them as a military force with a distinct ethno-cultural identity that includes Cossack schools with standard subjects but also Cossack traditions and history.<sup>375</sup> The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace makes this element of IW very clear. PMC use by Russia should be expected to expand, as they are cost-effective, resource-efficient, and deniable: 'It is also unlikely that exposing Moscow's shadowy practices will

<sup>373</sup> Anton Mardasov, 'Has Russia grown tired of Syria's Bashar al-Assad?', Aljazeera.com, last updated May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/rift-moscow-damascus-200517173011730.html>.

<sup>374</sup> *Forgotten lives-Life under regime rule in former opposition-held East Ghouta*, Middle East Institute And Etana Syria, 2017.

<sup>375</sup> RT, 'Of Russian Origin: Cossacks,' rt.com, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://russiapedia.rt.com/of-russian-origin/cossacks/>.

prompt reevaluation or embarrassment on the part of Russian policymakers. Indeed, the use of surrogates is a long-established practice in Russian and Soviet foreign policies.’<sup>376</sup>

Russian PMCs are utilized in both offensive and defensive means operationally.<sup>377</sup>

Wagner is thought to have been involved in the assault on a US position in Syria in 2018 (American intelligence reports they were definitely Russian). The PMC’s true independence of action and freedom of maneuver is illustrated by the report that Russian military claimed they were not in command of this element (American forces tried to deconflict the situation in order to avoid engaging this force). After the paramilitary unit attacked with artillery and tank fire and Russia denied knowledge, the apparently rogue element was brutally repulsed and US forces killed between 2-300 of the attackers with CAS provided by F-22 aircraft and their own direct fires (no Americans were killed).<sup>378</sup>

These tactical taskings can have strategic impact, such as securing state-level infrastructure assets: Russian Energy Minister Aleksandr Novak revealed in March 2017 that Moscow and their Syrian counterpart executed a five year contract for a newly registered Russian firm called Evro Polis to “liberate oil and gas fields, plants and other infrastructure captured by enemies of the regime, and then guard them.” In return they received a quarter of the fields’ output and compensation for their military expenditures.<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Paul Stronski, ‘Implausible Deniability: Russia’s Private Military Companies,’ [carnegieendowment.org](https://carnegieendowment.org), last updated June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/06/02/implausible-deniability-russia-s-private-military-companies-pub-81954>.

<sup>377</sup> Sergey Sukhankin, ‘Russia’s Hired Guns in Africa,’ [ecfr.eu](https://ecfr.eu), last updated November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018, [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_russias\\_hired\\_guns\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_hired_guns_in_africa).

<sup>378</sup> Thomas Gibbons-Neff, ‘How a 4-Hour Battle Between Russian Mercenaries and U.S. Commandos Unfolded in Syria,’ [nytimes.com](https://nytimes.com), last updated May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/24/world/middleeast/american-commandos-russian-mercenaries-syria.html>.

<sup>379</sup> Kimberly Marten, ‘Russia’s use of semi-state security forces: the case of the Wagner Group,’ *Post-Soviet Affairs* 35, no. 3 (2019): 194.

Figure 8 *PMCs deployed by Russia*<sup>380</sup>



More recently, Russian PMCs are thought to have participated in the June seizure of Libyan oil fields by paramilitary forces. Libya's National Oil Corporation Chairman Mustafa Sanalla commented:

Libya's oil is for the Libyan people, and I completely reject attempts by foreign countries to prevent the resumption of oil production. It is noteworthy that many countries are themselves benefitting from the absence of Libyan oil from global markets. Some of them cynically express their public regret for Libya's continued inability to produce oil while all the time working in the background to support blockading forces... We do not need Russian and other foreign mercenaries in Libyan oilfields whose goal is to prevent oil production... While foreign mercenaries continue to be paid vast sums of money to prevent the NOC from carrying out its essential duties, the rest of the Libyan population suffers, not just through the absence of oil revenues but also through the loss to the nation of the

<sup>380</sup> 'UPDATE 5262020 Russian Wagner Group Mercenaries Flee Libya,' last posted on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://cybershafarat.com/2020/05/24/wagnerrussia/>

disastrous decay of our oil infrastructure through corrosion and the inability of NOC staff to carry out essential maintenance.<sup>381</sup>

This action matches the description of PMC operations noted by US military in 2018. They further noted that mercenaries earn of a share of the production proceeds from the oil fields they reclaim. PMCs may or may not choose to coordinate or deconflict with the Russian military, but they are recognized with combat awards by the Kremlin, and trained by the Russian Defense Ministry.<sup>382</sup> Reuters reported that PMC personnel ‘fly to Syria on board Russian military aircraft which land at Russian bases. When they are injured, they are treated in hospitals reserved for the Russian military and get state medals.’<sup>383</sup>

PMCs have also recently deployed elsewhere into Africa. It is important to remember that in IW, these benefits aren’t solely enjoyed by the element in question but by their partner force or proxy, and Wagner ‘improved the precision of LNA artillery and mortar rounds, exacted a damaging psychological toll with sniper fire, and enabled [Khalifa] Haftar’s forces to seize territory for the first time’ in Libya.<sup>384</sup> Specifically, African nations working with a Russian PMC instead of America means avoiding the task of vetting one’s troops and commanders for human rights violations (those found would be excluded from training) and enjoying the benefits

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<sup>381</sup> National Oil Corporation, ‘NOC deeply concerned at Russian mercenary presence at Sharara oilfield,’ noc.ly, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://noc.ly/index.php/en/new-4/6001-noc-deeply-concerned-at-russian-mercenary-presence-at-sharara-oilfield>.

Sergey Sukhankin, ‘Russia’s Hired Guns in Africa,’ ecf.eu, last updated November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018, [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_russias\\_hired\\_guns\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_hired_guns_in_africa).

<sup>382</sup> Thomas Gibbons-Neff, ‘How a 4-Hour Battle Between Russian Mercenaries and U.S. Commandos Unfolded in Syria,’ nytimes.com, last updated May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/24/world/middleeast/american-commandos-russian-mercenaries-syria.html>.

<sup>383</sup> Maria Tsvetkova and Anton Zverev, ‘Ghost soldiers: the Russians secretly dying for the Kremlin in Syria,’ reuters.com, last updated November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-insight/ghost-soldiers-the-russians-secretly-dying-for-the-kremlin-in-syria-idUSKBN12Y0M6>.

<sup>384</sup> Paul Stronski, ‘Implausible Deniability: Russia’s Private Military Companies,’ carnegieendowment.org, last updated June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/06/02/implausible-deniability-russia-s-private-military-companies-pub-81954>.

of training with a proven, battle-hardened cadre.<sup>385</sup> Beyond Libya, Patriot Group (who has ties to the Federal Security Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Russian Aerospace Forces) has deployed to the Central African Republic (CAR) under a deal to provide CAR with “free military technical assistance” including five military instructors and 170 advisers.<sup>386</sup>

Patriot is thought to be responsible for assassinating three journalists who were investigating Russian PMCs.<sup>387</sup> Russian nationals Orkhan Dzhemal, Aleksandr Rastorguev and Kirill Radchenko were ambushed in the town of Sibut in CAR according to the mayor, Henri Depele. They were making a documentary about Wagner Group for the Investigation Control Center, a Russian news outlet backed by Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky. Khodorkovsky is a billionaire and well-known critic of the Russian government who lives in exile in London.<sup>388</sup> Meanwhile, CAR President Faustin-Archange Touadéra has confirmed the role of Russian PMCs in CAR. CAR is suffering through sectarian violence that has killed tens of thousands of people and created more than a million refugees and thousands of child soldiers – 80 percent of the country is under the control of local warlords.<sup>389</sup> It is also a trove of natural resources and wealth rich in gold, diamonds, and uranium. CAR’s political instability, international isolation, and inability to extract these resources by itself align with the following strategic points according to Berzins: iv. from war with conventional forces to specially prepared forces and commercial

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<sup>385</sup> Kyle Rempfer, ‘Why this US general says Russian Wagner mercenaries in Africa “concern me greatly,”’ *militarytimes.com*, last updated April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2019/04/04/why-this-us-general-says-russian-wagner-mercenaries-in-africa-concern-me-greatly/>.

<sup>386</sup> Laignee Barron, ‘3 Russian Journalists Have Been Killed in the Central African Republic,’ *time.com*, last updated August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, <https://time.com/5354799/russian-journalists-killed-central-african-republic/>.

<sup>387</sup> Sergey Sukhankin, ‘Russia’s Hired Guns in Africa,’ *ecfr.eu*, last updated November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018, [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_russias\\_hired\\_guns\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_hired_guns_in_africa).

<sup>388</sup> Laignee Barron, ‘3 Russian Journalists Have Been Killed in the Central African Republic,’ *time.com*, last updated August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, <https://time.com/5354799/russian-journalists-killed-central-african-republic/>.

<sup>389</sup> ‘Central African Republic: “We can build Africa without weapons,”’ *allafrica.com*, Plan International, last updated June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202006240497.html>.

irregular groupings; and ix. from symmetric to asymmetric warfare by a combination of political, economic, information, technological, and ecological campaigns.<sup>390</sup>

Russia has used various conflict zones as a ‘battle lab’ model that provides information on products and tactics, and develops new concepts of operation fieldable to other elements; it also shapes future operations and concepts. It does this by exploring concepts, technologies, and tactics to advance capabilities, as well as promoting new technologies and procedures for operations, technology, and support to combat forces.<sup>391</sup> Typically, battle labs use models and simulations, however Russia’s IW strategy of coercion, limited military confrontation, and persistent (if implausible) denial allow PMCs to explore and identify best practices internally as well as ‘dry run’ and reconnoiter opposing parties’ TTPs and reactions for future operational use. PMC involvement in Ukraine was a proof of concept for the first two strategy points of *Little Green Men*: it dealt with states and regions on the periphery of the Russian Federation as well as giving primacy to nonmilitary factors (information and intelligence). Their deployments to Syria and Libya have extended that primacy by securing economically viable infrastructure. In Africa they will have nothing resembling limitations or restraints.

#### IV. NORTH KOREA

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), more commonly referred to as North Korea, is in a somewhat unique position on the list of the 4+1 (China, Russia, Iran, DPRK + VEOs... or 2+3 – China, Russia + Iran, DPRK, and VEOs), depending on who one works for.

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<sup>390</sup> Sergey Sukhankin, ‘Russia’s Hired Guns in Africa,’ [ecfr.eu](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_hired_guns_in_africa), last updated November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018, [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_russias\\_hired\\_guns\\_in\\_africa](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_russias_hired_guns_in_africa).

Janis Berzins, ‘Russia’s New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy,’ April 2014, policy paper no. 2, National Defence Academy of Latvia Center for Security and Strategic Research.

<sup>391</sup> Scott T. Sturkol, ‘Air Mobility Battlelab deactivates after 10 years,’ [af.mil](https://www.amc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/147452/air-mobility-battlelab-deactivates-after-10-years/), Air Mobility Command, last updated September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008, <https://www.amc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/147452/air-mobility-battlelab-deactivates-after-10-years/>.

The dearth of information hinders true situational awareness the DPRK's intent, but context can be useful. Kim provides a historic context both of the ruling Communist party and governing documents, describing their current situation as one that frustrates virtually all parties.<sup>392</sup>

Southern neighbors the Republic of Korea (ROK) have always had a warm place in their hearts for what were, in many cases, familial relations across the border of the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ), but this is being replaced with disappointment and concern over the DPRK's reckless and intimidating behavior. Meanwhile patron states China and Russia both have distanced themselves somewhat from nuclear brinksmanship that stands in outright defiance of a UN Security Council resolution.<sup>393</sup> Conversely, Tasic suggests that the DPRK's COG may have never been on the Korean peninsula... instead he suggests that it is actually their closest ally – China.<sup>394</sup> The patronage of China to the DPRK would fit well with the concept of DPRK serving to push the boundaries of international norms, while China is seen to bring them around to reason (or not). Both reap the rewards of firm knowledge gained vis-à-vis red lines, tolerances, strategic, operational, and tactical reactions that may be particular to one administration or leader, etc... Similar to Russia's use of PMCs, DPRK acts as the deniable, 'wild card' external party to China's *Peer-Competitor* status.<sup>395</sup> Observing the DPRK use of cyberwarfare, this relationship seems even more plausible.

DPRK has 6,800 cyber-operators mostly associated with the Reconnaissance General Bureau; as opponents, the US, Japan and ROK are highly networked across their societies and present appealing cyber targets. Smaller and weaker nations may typically use asymmetric cyber

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<sup>392</sup> Koo Sub Kim, 'Substance of North Korea's military threats and the security environment in Northeast Asia,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 21, no. 3 (September 2009): 240.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Mirko Tasic, 'Exploring North Korea's Asymmetric Military Strategy,' *Naval War College Review* 72, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): 65.

<sup>395</sup> Weichong Ong, 'The rise of hybrid actors in the Asia-Pacific,' *The Pacific Review* 31, NO. 6 (2018): 757.

infrastructure targeting against more powerful nations, and the DPRK fall into this dynamic. All the more since the DPRK is essentially ‘firewalled’ from external networks with an economy that does not rely on information technology infrastructure, thus making retaliation exceptionally difficult.<sup>396</sup> DPRK efforts have expanded to social engineering such as emails, text messaging, and other social media attacks to expose military secrets, create social discord and even national schisms. Attacks now include ordinary citizens and public facilities, particularly to demoralize or intimidate ROK policymakers. They have also improved their tradecraft with more covert and untraceable attacks.<sup>397</sup>

DPRK cyber-attacks include espionage, as well as infrastructure and political system disruption of the ROK... government and private institutions, including the Nonghyup bank servers and cyber-attacks on multiple ROK media, banking and government organizations were attacked between 2011 and 2013. The first major attack on ROK critical hard infrastructure was an attempted attack on Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power in 2014. In keeping with their Chinese patrons, they have used American allies as cyber-targets to gain access to US as well as ROK strategic plans and senior military and Blue House (ROK capitol building) information equities via phishing and hacking attacks. Another nod to the Chinese is economic crime meant to gain currency to cope with ever-tightening sanctions. DPRK is blamed for an \$81M robbery in Bangladesh and the global Wannacry virus.<sup>398</sup>

DPRK criminal endeavors such as smuggling operations provide a means to bypass sanctions, sustain the survival of the regime, and continue the development of nuclear armament.

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<sup>396</sup> Ian Bowers, ‘The use and utility of hybrid warfare on the Korean Peninsula,’ *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 6 (2018): 771.

<sup>397</sup> Dal Hyeoung Bae, ‘The Hybrid Threat in the Korean Peninsula Theater and a Comprehensive Developmental Direction for the Korean Armed Forces,’ *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 29, no. 1 (March 2017): 114

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 772.



The business end of their revenue stream includes the manufacturing and distribution of drugs, counterfeit currency, and counterfeit cigarettes and pharmaceuticals as well as heroine and crystal methamphetamine. These operations are all managed by Office 39 (also known as Room 39), which essentially operates as an organized crime headquarters element, and punishes betrayal or failure with assassination. In 2009, a Vanity Fair article cited Syung Je Park, of the ROK military affiliated think-tank *Asia Strategy Institute*. ‘They need money,’ says Park. ‘Where else can they get it?’ Hwang Jang Yop was the regime’s chief ideologist and Kim Jong Il’s tutor until he defected. He was interviewed by Park, as was another thousand defectors. DPRK depends on international aid just to feed their people, and they have also branched into weapons dealing in order to bring in revenue. ‘More than 70 percent of the missiles’ components are imported from overseas.’<sup>399</sup> High-seas shipping interdiction has revealed Cuba as one source of weapons being shipped to the DPRK.<sup>400</sup>

As *The National Interest* points out, embargoed countries turn to each other when forced out of markets. Indeed, the Ghadir-class diesel-electric mini-submarines, though designed and manufactured in Iran, are derivative of North Korean Yugo and Sango class submarines.<sup>401</sup> Iran uses its Navy to patrol the Persian Gulf and specifically the Straits of Hormuz (SOH). In this circumstance, diesel electric that are nearly undetectable for mine-laying are ‘ideal candidates for patrol and ambush operations against hostile surface vessels.’<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> David Rose, ‘North Korea’s Dollar Store,’ *vanityfair.com*, Conde Nast, last updated August 5, 2009, <https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2009/09/office-39-200909>.

<sup>400</sup> Ian Bowers, ‘The use and utility of hybrid warfare on the Korean Peninsula,’ *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 6 (2018): 773.

<sup>401</sup> Christopher Harmer, ‘Fact Sheet: Iran’s Submarine Force,’ *understandingwar.org*, Institute for the Study of War, last updated June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, <http://www.understandingwar.org/reference/fact-sheet-irans-submarine-force>.

<sup>402</sup> Mark Episkopos, ‘Yes, Iran has North Korean Submarines,’ *nationalinterest.org*, Center for the National Interest, last updated June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/reboot/yes-iran-has-north-korean-submarines-163567>.

UN investigators believe VX nerve agent (VX) was sold to Syria by DPRK (goods were shipped directly to Syria's chemical weapon agency<sup>403</sup>) to raise needed funds for their nuclear weapons development program. The assassination of Kim Jong Nam in Malaysia in 2017 revealed the DPRK's ability to utilize and manipulate human assets as well as move VX across international borders. In response, the US sanctioned the government of the DPRK for the violation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 in the Kuala Lumpur airport; sanctions may cover foreign aid, military assistance and diplomatic relations.<sup>404</sup> Prior to this the US State Department's most recent North Korea country report on terrorism stated it 'is not known to have sponsored any terrorist acts since the bombing of a Korean Airlines flight in 1987.'<sup>405</sup> This was the last in a string of terror attacks that included culmination of several incidents bombings, assassinations of government officials and the attempted assassination of ROK President Chun Doo-Hwan.<sup>406</sup>

DPRK is a nation preparing for war, which explains why the tiny nation has the world's fourth largest military.<sup>407</sup> Decapitation of leadership to facilitate regime change is an obvious choice for operations, as is the targeting of strategic facilities in the DPRK. An IW planning context would allow for multiple redundancies, ruses (fake facilities, etc.) and decoys (the legendary body-double ploy). If China is truly the COG, these will extend into their terrain and domain, be it cyber, information, command and control or air defense. While the DPRK may

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<sup>403</sup> Ian Bowers, 'The use and utility of hybrid warfare on the Korean Peninsula,' *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 6 (2018): 773.

<sup>404</sup> Laignee Barron, 'The U.S. Has Sanctioned North Korea Over the Assassination of Kim Jong Nam,' time.com, last updated March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018, <https://time.com/5188920/north-korea-kim-jong-nam-chemical-weapons/>.

<sup>405</sup> Robert E. Kelly, 'Terrorism's Place in South Korean Grand Strategy,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 29, no. 3 (September 2017): 419.

<sup>406</sup> Ian Bowers, 'The use and utility of hybrid warfare on the Korean Peninsula,' *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 6 (2018): 773.

<sup>407</sup> Koo Sub Kim, 'Substance of North Korea's military threats and the security environment in Northeast Asia,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 21, no. 3 (September 2009): 243.

have stepped away from the spectacular international terrorism they conducted in the 80s, the communization of ROK remains a goal of the regime. This has been the limiting factor of inter-Korean ties since the 6th convention of the Workers' Party in 1980.<sup>408</sup> Owing to this overt political aspect, IW is always a choice for the DPRK.

## V. CONCLUSION

Within GPC, traditional warfare exists only as a theoretical threat, but IW remains a ubiquitous occurrence as it has historically. It is well documented that near-peer competitors, rogue states, and non-state actors utilize IW via terrorists, proxies, and other means to strike blows for their advancement without triggering actual conflict with America. Far from changing, Dr. Spencer B. Meredith at the National Defense University and LTC Mike P. Maloney of USASOC note that VEO patronage by China and Russia is on the increase and to be expected in the future.<sup>409</sup> So it is that America can expect IW operations to remain the dominant form of warfare.

American intelligence agencies should begin an extensive offensive counterintelligence recruitment and collection effort against the 4+1 array of threats. As John Schindler, National Security Agency (NSA) analyst and counterintelligence specialist notes: "The real pros engage in offensive counterintelligence... recruiting spies inside the enemy camp, particularly inside the opposing intelligence service. That's how you gain control of the enemy's central nervous system: You know what he knows about you; hence you can deceive him at a strategic level."<sup>410</sup>

Corporate partnerships and agreements must be secured to achieve security of American

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<sup>408</sup> Koo Sub Kim, 'Substance of North Korea's military threats and the security environment in Northeast Asia,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 21, no. 3 (September 2009): 240.

<sup>409</sup> Dr. David Walton, 'SOF Paradigm in Great Power Competition,' October 2017, Strategic Multilayer Assessment, Invited Perspective Series published by NSI, Inc.

<sup>410</sup> Jacqueline Deal, 'Hacking OPM,' *National Review*, July 20<sup>th</sup> 2015.

Intellectual Property (IP). According to the United States Trade Representative (after a seven-month investigation into China's IP theft), 'Chinese theft of American IP currently costs between \$225 billion and \$600 billion annually.' James Andrew Lewis, senior vice president at the Center for Strategic and International Studies notes that 'China has sought to acquire US technology by any means, licit or illicit... Espionage and theft were part of this, but so were forced technology transfers or mandatory joint ventures as a condition for doing business in China.'<sup>411</sup>

To be clear, one must look at the bottom line financially. America should pursue economic war footing agreements (similar to WWII) against China to partner government and corporate efforts, harden defenses, and recoup money lost to China's thieving. If such measures recouped annually such losses with 100% mathematic effectiveness (which is admittedly implausible), it would take approximately 4.7 years to recoup the money spent on the Iraq war (at the low end of the annual Chinese theft estimate – America spent \$1.06T on Operation Iraqi Freedom).<sup>412</sup> It would take approximately 1.8 years on the high end, assuming American recoupment of \$600B annually, and while this example is more illustrative than literal, it is useful to provide a clear picture of the extent of China's crimes.

Nor is the term *war footing* a mistake. That is how it is being painted by Socialists, seeking to take the initiative and dominate the media narrative in light of the GPC-fueled arms race that is well under way.<sup>413</sup> As Australia realizes its place in this picture and seeks to ramp up

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<sup>411</sup> Sherisse Pham, 'How much has the US lost from China's IP theft?', money.cnn.com, Turner Broadcast System, last updated March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, <https://money.cnn.com/2018/03/23/technology/china-us-trump-tariffs-ip-theft/index.html>.

<sup>412</sup> Kimberly Amadeo, 'Cost of Iraq War, Its Timeline, and the Economic Impact,' thebalance.com, US Economy and News, dotdash, last updated July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.thebalance.com/cost-of-iraq-war-timeline-economic-impact-3306301>.

<sup>413</sup> Mike Head, 'Australian government seeks to place country on war footing,' wsws.org, World Socialist Web Site, International Committee of the Fourth International, last updated July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2020/07/04/mili-j04.html>.

military spending by 40%, it is hard to disagree with the idea.<sup>414</sup> Strategically America must deal openly and honestly with the enemy and *their* ideology.

America needs to consider where our real losses are occurring and what our economy might look like with a China that feared our response to their thievery. In terms of secondary and tertiary effects one could hardly ask for more benefit: IW and IO built upon the neutralization of China would form the basis of a narrative targeted against Russian, Iranian, and North Korean actions. Such actions would form the basis of a plan that highlights peace over war, and what happens before wars. This would be built upon the concept used in Counter-Terror Finance, i.e. if you want to do business with America, you cannot do business with China. The result of disaggregating China's influence in illicit trade and black markets globally would break down supply chains that put money into Jihadi coffers and weapons into Jihadi hands. Muqawama makes clear the Islamist Jihadi model of warfare; they remain at war with America and will be for the foreseeable future. China, Russia, and Iran will use this in their GPC plan, because America's current plan isn't working.

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<sup>414</sup> Al Jazeera, 'Australia prepares massive defence boost in "dangerous" world,' [aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/07/australia-prepares-massive-defence-boost-dangerous-world-200701030011100.html), last updated July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/07/australia-prepares-massive-defence-boost-dangerous-world-200701030011100.html>.

# Conclusions

*Our traditional approach is either we're at peace or at conflict. And I think that's insufficient to deal with the actors that actually seek to advance their interests while avoiding our strengths. And as an aside, you know, I don't find the current phasing construct for operational plans particularly useful right now. If you think about it, we bend authorities and capabilities according to where we think we are in a phase. And our adversaries, or potential adversaries, or our competitors, they don't actually – they don't actually find themselves limited by that same – by that same framework.*

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Joseph Dunford<sup>415</sup>

This paper has examined Irregular Warfare for the purpose of correcting American strategy. Corrections noted here are primarily policy driven, as these have been key to success previously. American popular buy-in, realistic policy and doctrine that provides defined end-states, acknowledging the ideology of our enemies, and civilian oversight are starting points from which there will be a long road ahead. The past two decades have only emboldened America's enemies and opponents to utilize IW because of her failure to translate tactical successes into strategic victory in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>416</sup> As a republic, America's COG remains her people. When our policy leaders and military have lost the support of the people, the results were overall failure. This occurred in Vietnam and American IW capability was rolled back for decades... it can easily happen again. Only a 9/11-level tragedy has the power today to

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<sup>415</sup> Paul Scharre, *American Strategy and the Six Stages of Grief*, War on the Rocks, War on the Rocks, accessed April 5th 2020, <https://warontherocks.com/2016/10/american-strategy-and-the-six-phases-of-grief/>.

<sup>416</sup> Nicholas A. Heras and Carole O'Leary, *Political Strategy in Unconventional Warfare: Opportunities lost in Eastern Syria and Preparing for the Future*, (Tampa: Joint Special Operations University, 2019), 1.

drive public calls for change in the military, and as such IW will almost certainly remain out of the public realm in the future. Consequently, that means that the various remedies offered below are unlikely to be implemented any time soon.

## **I. AMERICAN POPULAR BUY-IN**

Throughout the 70s and 80s the military shifted to an all-volunteer force. When the draft went away, the ability of events to impact the American populace (the COG) was decreased. The American military and SOF specifically evolved into an American warrior caste.<sup>417</sup> As President Lyndon Johnson's former White House aide Joseph Califano stated 'by removing the middle class from even the threat of conscription, we remove perhaps the greatest inhibition on a President's decision to go to war.'<sup>418</sup> In 2015 less than one half of one percent of Americans were on active duty with the military, with the resulting effect that most Americans have no connectivity to military matters at all.<sup>419</sup> The Niger incident, and its aftermath, were thus muted compared to the outrage that would have been assumed in decades past. The deaths of 4 soldiers, though questioned, were analyzed and evaluated in-house by USSOCOM but quickly slipped out of American popular memory.<sup>420</sup>

The public's lack of visibility on the IW problem is compounded by a generally scarce amount of defense industry tied to IW. Defense industry and the military industrial complex is

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<sup>417</sup> Amy Schafer, 'The Warrior Caste,' slate.com, Slate Group, Graham Holdings Company, last updated August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2017/08/the-warrior-caste-of-military-families-that-fight-americas-wars.html>.

<sup>418</sup> Phil Klay, 'The 1% Army: Andrew Bacevich on How America Lost the Military,' thedailybeast.com, last updated September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-1-army-andrew-bacevich-on-how-america-lost-the-military>.

<sup>419</sup> Kim Parker, Anthony Cilluffo and Renee Stepler, '6 facts about the U.S. military and its changing demographics,' pewresearch.org, Fact Tank, Pew Research Center, last updated April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/13/6-facts-about-the-u-s-military-and-its-changing-demographics/>.

<sup>420</sup> Andrew Feickert, *US SOF: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2019), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS21048>.

well documented in its ability to skew congressional votes for funding and other resourcing for military programs – thus the projects that need a lot of funding provide jobs for their constituents. Examples are plentiful: in 1977, military orders accounted for 55 percent of shipbuilding construction in the United States. By 1985, this had become a 93 percent dependency of the shipyards upon the government, with the obvious realization that these funds were voted on and approved to keep jobs in certain congressional districts.<sup>421</sup> As a result the military preferentially funds big ticket items. Hoffman noted: ‘At the time of the 9/11 attacks, Washington was embarking on a defense transformation emphasizing missile defense, space assets, precision weaponry, and information technology,’ which remarkably mirrors both the current direction of the DOD and the President’s direction to stand up the newest service, the Space Force.<sup>422</sup> Drones provide a telling example – the DOD opted to use the U2 spy plane instead of the Global Hawk drone to realize a savings of \$2.5B in 2012. When the Global Hawk manufacturer, Northrup Grumman, learned of it they essentially forced the DOD to buy their drone. This was accomplished when chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, California Republican Buck McKeon, and Virginia Democrat Jim Moran of the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee wrote a letter to incoming SECDEF Chuck Hagel pressing him to fund the acquisition of the Global Hawks...

Meanwhile, Northrop’s political action committee had already made contributions of at least \$113,000 to the campaign committee of House Armed Services Committee Chairman McKeon, who also happened to represent the Southern California district where Northrop’s assembly plant for the Global Hawk is located. Representative Moran, the co-author of the letter with McKeon, who

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<sup>421</sup> Seymour Melman, ‘From Private to State Capitalism: How the Permanent War Economy Transformed the Institutions of American Capitalism,’ *Journal of Economic Issues* 31, no. 2 (June 1997): 320.

<sup>422</sup> Frank G. Hoffman, ‘Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs,’ *Orbis*, (Summer, 2006): 395.



represented the northern Virginia district where Northrop has its headquarters, had gotten \$22,000 in contributions.<sup>423</sup>

## II. REALISTIC POLICY, DOCTRINE & DEFINED END-STATES

That America is conducting IW poorly and even wrongly is no longer in question. Poor execution of American IW reveals predictable thematic failures which occurred in other IW campaigns such as piece-mealing forces into theater. Recurring problematic TTPs also include torture, insider attacks, and ignorance (perhaps even willful) of the enemy (Ho Chi Minh's allegiance and Iraq's lack of WMD come to mind). Two are critical and within the reach of policymakers to change:

- *Policy overreach without the full intent to execute the mission*
- *Over-extension of an elite unit*

Policy overreach can be rectified with the use of doctrine that acknowledges long- and short-term effects and goes beyond party lines to illustrate proper activities and operations. When facing an existential threat such as Chinese multi-generational warfare, we cannot afford to do otherwise. Blurred Lines cites 'an ever-decreasing level of knowledge of military history,' 'poor knowledge of military theory, particularly of the standard works such as Clausewitz's *On War* and Sun Tzu's *Art of War*,' and 'pressure to develop another microtheory (sic) to explain an element of political or military behavior or practice, and then to fit history into it,' as demonstrated in the instance of the Crimean Annexation.<sup>424</sup> Poor practitioner knowledge was

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<sup>423</sup> Garreth Porter, "The Permanent-War Complex Industry in the cockpit: what Eisenhower couldn't have foreseen," *The American Conservative*, November-December 2018.

<sup>424</sup> Donald Stoker and Craig Whiteside, "Blurred Lines - Gray-Zone Conflict and Hybrid War—Two Failures of American Strategic Thinking," *Naval War College Review* 73, no. 1 (2020): 25.

called out by Dr. Stephen Biddle on the West Point IW podcast, as he noted that there is simply poor doctrine being utilized... hybrid is not a term in American doctrine.<sup>425</sup>

USSOCOM has a bias for kinetic action as does the American government but this has led to the overextension of the command. While it may brief well, reality suggests it executes poorly. The effects of SOF as the ‘go-to’ choice for nearly two decades of combat are startling: comprising just 3% of the Joint Force, SOF have sustained over 40% of total US casualties.<sup>426</sup> This culture of carrying on the mission even in the face of obviously broken concepts is widely adhered to both in the military generally and SOF specifically. As far back as 2011, Admiral Olson, then the USSOCOM commander, noted that manpower had doubled, budgets had tripled, but deployments had *quadrupled*. USSOCOM operators were showing signs of ‘fraying around the edges.’<sup>427</sup> The doctrinally correct and accurate use of IW as a theory must be implemented and built out into a working model that includes an appropriate troop to task model across DOD. It has to be more than the castoff concepts the DOD doesn’t like because it doesn’t do them well. IW theory must be built out by removing the limits of the current joint definition and placing non-violent, *Shaping* aspects into consideration, forcing GCCs to improve IW engagement. TCPs without an IW plan should be rejected by policy makers.

Corrections have been posited throughout the years: as early as 2004, Basilici and Simmons (notably under Thesis Advisor Hy Rothstein at the Naval Post-graduate School) proposed ‘legislation must be passed that separates the UW capability from the conventional

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<sup>425</sup> Dr. Steven Biddle, ‘Does Building Partner Military Capacity Work?’, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, in Irregular Warfare Podcast, by Princeton Empirical Studies of Conflict and West Point Modern Warfare Institute, podcast audio, 39:10, <https://mwi.usma.edu/building-partner-military-capacity-work/>.

<sup>426</sup> Mr. Mark Mitchell, ASD SOLIC Witness Statement for Hearing: Evolution, Transformation, and Sustainment: A Review of the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command – Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities (Committee on Armed Services)

<sup>427</sup> Andrew Feickert, *US SOF: Background and Issues for Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2011), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/RS21048>.

military by creating a new organization that could develop its own unique UW culture designed to carry out UW operations—the Department of Strategic Services. Only through legislation like this can the DoD truly transform.’<sup>428</sup> In 2006, Hoffman felt the solution could be rendered as less of a creation and more of a transition: ‘In a world of persistent conflict, it is time to consider further institutionalizing SOCOM not as a separate joint command, but as a distinct service — the Special Operations Force (SOF)... SOCOM oversight billets already exist, and they exercise service-like programming and budget authority.’<sup>429</sup> These are now joined by both Command Sergeant Major (Retired) Mike Hall and Colonel (Retired) Mark Mitchell (who also served as the ASD SOLIC) in an indictment of the Pentagon bureaucracy:

In the absence of an empowered ASD(SO/LIC), the USSOCOM commander often ends up making critical decisions about SOF strategy, capability and force structure that should be made by civilian leaders. The net result is an inverted relationship runs counter to the concept of civilian oversight. It also runs counter to the law and the repeatedly expressed will of Congress.

In 2016, Congress began to recognize that the resources, access, and influence of the USSOCOM commander had significantly outpaced the ability of ASD(SO/LIC). The changes in DoD had deprived the SecDef of fully informed and unadulterated policy advice regarding the employment of SOF and management of associated risks. It had also robbed the USSOCOM commander of the clear strategic guidance he deserves and the advocacy to balance the numerous competing demands. It also significantly reduced top cover for unpopular — but necessary — changes across the SOF enterprise. Consequently, the FY2017 NDAA sought to strengthen the role of ASD(SO/LIC) as a “service secretary” for SOF. Sadly, that effort has met much resistance within DoD, and half-hearted implementation has produced limited effects.<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> Steven P. Basilici and Jeremy Simmons, ‘Transformation: A Bold Case for Unconventional Warfare,’ (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2004), 110-111.

<sup>429</sup> Frank G. Hoffman, ‘Complex Irregular Warfare: The Next Revolution in Military Affairs,’ *Orbis*, (Summer, 2006): 408.

<sup>430</sup> Mark Mitchell, ‘Congress should elevate the top civilian position overseeing special operations,’ *militarytimes.com*, Sightline Media Group, last updated May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/06/congress-should-elevate-the-top-civilian-position-overseeing-special-operations/>.

Michael T. Hall, ‘Protecting the future of the special operations forces enterprise,’ *militarytimes.com*, Sightline Media Group, last updated May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, <https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/23/protecting-the-future-of-the-special-operations-forces-enterprise/>.

The concept of the USSOCOM commander acting in a manner that is no longer military strategy but the purview of policy that is *Grand Strategy* is just the first step to consider. Nor is it coincidental that since 2004, new considerations and suggested means to change USSOCOM have been proffered. Now there are Command Sergeant Majors and Colonels driving efforts to make changes. The entire cultural construct of SOF and USSOCOM is beyond the scope of this paper to examine, so a final statement must suffice. These changes are not improvements to help a system operate better, they are repairs needed to a system that is broken.

### III. IDEOLOGY

Two brands of violent political ideology, Islamism and Communism, are found to be common threads in both the NDS and case study material. China is successfully messaging its political narrative such that many in America believe China to no longer be Communist. Islam is used by Iran and the VEOs to wage a global insurgency without end. American policy must embrace an anti-Communist slant to educate the populace and determine a proper approach to Islamist/Jihadi non-state actors. In terms of strategic failure, America has failed by trying to blandly buy into the concept of extremism; only recently has the enemy ideology been described as Islamist. As a result, the fact that America faces a global insurgency has been denied by some. Two voices which demand the truth be acknowledged stand out. CIA analysis in 1987 cited Hezbollah's 'aspirations to become a sponsor of worldwide Islamic fundamentalism...' and that 'like their Iranian brethren, Hizballah (sic) maintains that the Islamic Revolution must be a worldwide phenomenon and cannot be confined within the boundaries of a singular country.'<sup>431</sup> Dr. David Kilcullen also made clear the global nature of the Islamist insurgency in 2005:

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<sup>431</sup> Dr. Matthew Levitt, 'Lebanese Hezbollah Interactive Map,' [washingtoninstitute.org](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org), last updated August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/hezbollahinteractivemap/>.

the global jihad is clearly an insurgency – a popular movement that seeks to change the status quo through violence and subversion... this insurgency seeks to transform the entire Islamic world and remake its relationship with the rest of the globe. It looks back to a golden age, seeking to re-establish a Caliphate throughout the Muslim world and, ultimately, expand the realm of Islam (Dar al Islam) to all human society... Al Qaeda and similar groups feed on local grievances, integrate them into broader ideologies, and link disparate conflicts through globalized communications, finances and technology. In this, Al Qaeda resembles the Communist Internationale of the twentieth century – a holding company and clearing-house for world revolution. But whereas the Comintern was a state-sponsored support organization... the global jihad is itself an insurgent movement... the Islamist jihad seeks to form the basis for a new supra-national state.<sup>432</sup>

Understanding the concept of *Muqawama* or ‘persistent conflict’ must form the basis of a strategy that knows there will be decades more conflict ahead.<sup>433</sup> When one mode of warfare fails, the other will be utilized, and wise warriors do not limit their options. America’s traditional warfare capability and lack of IW capability effectively guarantee that IW will be used against her first, though perhaps not exclusively. The IRB couldn’t fight Royal troops in the streets or fields... so they used Dynamite. Algerians couldn’t gain a tactical advantage, so they used atrocity to gain world attention when it induced French torture sessions. The PLO lost confidence in traditional warfare after the Six Day War, so they hijacked planes and killed Olympians. Russia didn’t need to start a war, they simply sponsored friendly militias. China doesn’t have to design new weapons; they just steal the plans. Al-Baghdadi knew his caliphate was doomed, so he transitioned from traditional warfare to IW.

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<sup>432</sup> Dr. David J. Kilcullen, ‘Countering global insurgency,’ *Journal of Strategic Studies* 28, no.4 (2005): 604.

<sup>433</sup> Ehud Yaari, ‘The Muqawama Doctrine,’ Policy Analysis, [washingtoninstitute.org](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org), The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, last updated November 13, 2006, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-muqawama-doctrine>.

#### IV. CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT

In 1961, JFK identified IW as an operational capability America required and put the power of his office into the effort. He bypassed the DOD and outmaneuvered military parochialism at the highest ranks.<sup>434</sup> The next impetus to create such a capability would be the Munich massacre in 1972, as governments globally sought response capabilities to spectacular terror attacks.<sup>435</sup> Policy makers must determine what national goals American policy demands, then determine how all instruments of power, including the military, can be tasked to meet them. Grand Strategy trumps military operational considerations and will drive outcomes. Tactical security that approximates peace will fail to hold if strategic considerations of all parties don't maintain peace long-term, as has happened in Iraq and Afghanistan. Only by providing such goals can the military end-state be defined and strategically sound by linking them to policy. This is the role of civilian oversight of the military.

The office of ASD SOLIC must be elevated to directly interface with the SECDEF as an Undersecretary at least. Neglect heaped onto ASD SOLIC is illustrated by the position remaining unfilled and temporarily manned by another officer: Mr. Christopher Miller is *performing the duties of ASD SOLIC* and is actually the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism (SOCT).<sup>436</sup> Meanwhile, the military commander nominally reporting to ASD SOLIC, CDRUSSOCOM, has authority to directly interface with the SECDEF. This is an authority the ASD SOLIC does not enjoy. This leads to an improper

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<sup>434</sup> Linda Robinson, Austin Long, Kimberly Jackson and Rebeca Orrie; *Improving the Understanding of Special Operations*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2018), 45.

<sup>435</sup> Garret M. Graff, *The Threat Matrix* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2011) 43.

<sup>436</sup> 'Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict,' [policy.defense.gov](https://policy.defense.gov), Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://policy.defense.gov/OUSSDP-Offices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/>.

imbalance with CDRUSSOCOM acting in a manner that outstrips the supposed civilian oversight of the DOD.<sup>437</sup> Today's Joint Staff notes that the DOD must 'sustain IW as a core competency for the entire Joint Force,<sup>438</sup> not just SOF [Special Operations Forces].' But the Deputy Secretary of Defense, in what is almost a complete reversal, tasked the ASD SOLIC to develop a plan for institutionalizing IW in the DOD (directed in the 2018 National Defense Strategy by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff).<sup>439</sup>

Even as the latest NDS reveals lip service to suggest IW is still important, the Pentagon is shown to clearly hamstring the ASD SOLIC (who is dual-hatted yet still tasked to implement the NDS directives).<sup>440</sup> One immediate effect of this neglect is the cuts to USSOCOM's budget: the DOD for FY 2021 is the first to roll back USSOCOM advances since 9/11. In order to 'pay for' future capabilities supporting the GPC for the Sister Services (all four) the FY 21 budget includes a 5 percent reduction overall to SOCOM, and a 12% reduction in procurement power.

This proposed cut to SOCOM is explained away by the rationale that SOF has no role in GPC.<sup>441</sup> This paper demonstrates otherwise... During the Cold War GPC played out as IW and today's GPC will continue to play out as IW. IW would either be executed as *warfare of choice* by adversaries who cannot justify losing in traditional warfare or executed as *warfare of*

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<sup>437</sup> Mark Mitchell, 'Irregular Warfare Oversight in DC,' July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, in Irregular Warfare Podcast, by Princeton Empirical Studies of Conflict and West Point Modern Warfare Institute, podcast audio, 28:45, <https://mwi.usma.edu/irregular-warfare-oversight-dc/>.

<sup>438</sup> US Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0 Joint Operations*, edited by the Joint Staff, 2018, ix. Joint Force: A general term applied to a force composed of significant elements, assigned or attached, of two or more Military Departments operating under a single joint force commander. Modern American military operations are inherently joint, that is, conducted by more than a single service.

<sup>439</sup> US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy Irregular Warfare Annex Implementation Plan Brief to the Military Education Coordination Council*, edited by the Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, 2019, 2.

<sup>440</sup> US Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy Irregular Warfare Annex Implementation Plan Brief to the Military Education Coordination Council*, edited by the Joint Staff J7 Office of Irregular Warfare, 2019, 2.

<sup>441</sup> Thomas Trask, Mark Clark and Stuart Bradin, 'The role of special operations forces in a 'Great Power Conflict,' [militarytimes.com](https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/04/the-role-of-special-operations-forces-in-a-great-power-conflict/), Sightline Media Group, last updated May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2020/05/04/the-role-of-special-operations-forces-in-a-great-power-conflict/>

*necessity* by those who cannot address the US overmatch in defense posture. Iran, Russia, and Pakistan have backed the Taliban as a proxy force and they have fought America to a stalemate that ended at the negotiation table, not the signing of formal surrender documents.<sup>442</sup> ‘The U.S. military has struggled against poorly-equipped insurgent groups in Iraq, Libya and Somalia, just to name a few other examples. U.S. adversaries have noticed.’<sup>443</sup>

Policy makers must provide a balanced approach to defense preparations across the joint force of the DOD. Service Chiefs will never approve such moves as it is counter to their own self-interests. As has been shown, policy makers must be the guiding force in right-sizing IW versus traditional warfare efforts across manning, training, equipping, and resourcing streams of the DOD. Advanced weaponry, whether nukes or rail guns or hypersonic missiles, will keep driving proliferation brinksmanship but it will also keep forcing all parties to execute actions of competition below the threshold of war. *The GPC is Irregular Warfare*. The true threat of IW is that the most creative and adaptive minds will win the fight, whether they be rogue, peer or non-state actor, and America has frequently suffered a failure of imagination.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>442</sup> Seth Jones, ‘The Great Irregular Game,’ *The National Interest*, (September-October 2018): 62.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

<sup>444</sup> ‘9/11 Commission slams “failure of imagination,”’ cbc.ca, CBC/Radio-Canada, accessed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/9-11-commission-slams-failure-of-imagination-1.496495>.



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# Glossary

AQ: Al Qaeda

ASD SOLIC: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict

BOG: Boots on the ground

CAS: Close Air Support

COG: Center of Gravity

COIN: Counterinsurgency

CT: Counterterrorism

DASD: Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

DIME: Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic

DOD: Department of Defense

DPRK: Democratic People's Republic of Korea

FID: Foreign Internal Defense

FLN: (Algerian) Front de Liberation National

FM: Field Manual

FY: Fiscal Year

GCC: Geographical Combatant Commands

GIGN: Groupe d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale (National Gendarmerie Intervention Group)

GPC: Great Power Competition

GSG-9: Grenzschutzgruppe 9 (Border Guard Group 9)

HASC: House Armed Services Committee

HTT: Human Terrain Teams

ICBM: Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile

IRB: Irish Republican Brotherhood

ISIS: Islamic State or 'Daesh'

IW: Irregular Warfare

JFK: President John Fitzgerald Kennedy

JP: Joint Publication

JSOC: Joint Special Operations Command

MARSOC: Marine Corps Special Operations Command

MCDP: Marine Corps Doctrine Publication

MISO: Military Information Support Operations

NATO SOF: North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operations Forces

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NDAA: National Defense Authorization Act

NDS: National Defense Strategy

NKVD: People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs

PLO: Palestine Liberation Organization

PME: Professional Military Education

PMC: Private Military Contractors

RAND: The RAND Corporation (Research And Development)

ROK: Republic of Korea

SASC: Senate Armed Services Committee

SEAL: Sea, Air, and Land

SECDEF: Secretary of Defense

SF: Special Forces

SFA: Security Forces Assistance

SFQC: Special Forces Qualification Course

SOF: Special Operations Forces

TCP: Theater Campaign Plans

TRADOC: US Army Training and Doctrine Command

USASOC: United States Army Special Operations Command

USG: United States Government

USSOCOM: United States Special Operations Command

USSTRATCOM: United States Strategic Command

UW: Unconventional Warfare

VEO: Violent Extremist Organization

WMD: Weapon of Mass Destruction



# Appendix A – SOF Truths

## **Truth I: Humans are more important than hardware**

People – not equipment – make the critical difference. The right people, highly trained and working as a team, will accomplish the mission with the equipment available. On the other hand, the best equipment in the world cannot compensate for a lack of the right people.

## **Truth II: Quality is better than quantity**

A small number of people, carefully selected, well trained, and well led, are preferable to larger numbers of troops, some of whom may not be up to the task.

## **Truth III: Special Operations Forces cannot be mass produced**

It takes years to train operational units to the level of proficiency needed to accomplish difficult and specialized SOF missions. Intense training – both in SOF schools and units – is required to integrate competent individuals into fully capable units. This process cannot be hastened without degrading ultimate capability.

## **Truth IV: Competent Special Operations Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur**

Creation of competent, fully mission capable units takes time. Employment of fully capable special operations capability on short notice requires highly trained and constantly available SOF units in peacetime.

## **Truth V: Most special operations require non-SOF assistance**

The operational effectiveness of our deployed forces cannot be, and never has been, achieved without being enabled by our joint service partners. The support Air Force, Army, Marine and Navy engineers, technicians, intelligence analysts, and the numerous other professions that contribute to SOF, have substantially increased our capabilities and effectiveness throughout the world.<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> US Special Operations Command, *SOF Truths*, USSOCOM, accessed July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020, <https://www.socom.mil/about/sof-truths>.

# CV

## **TROY THOMAS**

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## **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Irregular Warfare, Military History, Special Operations, Motorcycles, Southwestern Studies, Weaponry, American History, Whiskey, Cigars

## **EDUCATION**

(Candidate) MA in Government (Thesis on Irregular Warfare), August 2020 – JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, Baltimore, MD

BS in Interdisciplinary Studies (Business cognate), Cum Laude, December 2014 – LIBERTY UNIVERSITY, Lynchburg, Virginia

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Defense Contractor, **USSOCOM, MacDill Air Force Base, FL**, July 2016 – Present

Corporate Security and Risk Analysis, **Prescient, LLC, Chicago IL**, December 2014 – June 2016

Special Forces Warrant Officer, **US Army Special Forces**, February 2006 – December 2014

Special Forces Medical Sergeant, **US Army Special Forces**, May 2000 – January 2006

## **RESEARCH / FIELD WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Multiple combat deployments with JSOC, Special Forces and NATO-SOF
- Multiple training deployments to Africa, Europe, and the Middle East
- 26 years Active Duty in the US Army
- 10 years living in Germany and 1 year in Korea
- Dakota Access Pipeline, ND, Intelligence Analysis, 2016
- Pasco Sheriff's Office Senior Trainer and Tactical Medic, Land O' Lakes, FL, 2017

## **HONORS / AWARDS**

Bronze Star, 5 awards

Combat Infantry Badge

Combat Medic Badge

Special Forces Tab

Master Parachutist Wings

## **MEMBERSHIPS / AFFILIATIONS**

Special Forces Association CH 60

Military Officers Association of America

American Legion CH 138, Port Tampa City